



1975
©
SHANG-CHI!
IRON FIST!
SONS OF THE TIGER!

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

SAVAGE FISTS OF KUNG FU

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ORIGINALLY
PRESENTED IN
THE
AVENGERS #48



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THE
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THERE'S MORE INSIDE THE BACK COVER! BUT YOU'VE GOT A WHOLE LOT OF MARTIAL ARTS MAGIC TO READ **FIRST!**

STAN LEE presents

SAVAGE FISTS OF KUNG FU

TM

Meet the Savage Fists of Kung Fu in the following four frantic fight-fests!
Read on, True Believer, it's a martial arts masterpiece
served up just for you!

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BY SAX ROHMER.

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THE MASTER PLAN OF FU MANCHU

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, THE SHADOW OF DR. FU MANCHU HAS LAIN HEAVILY ON THE SOIL OF THIS PLANET. HIS SCHEMES FOR WORLD CONQUEST ARE LEGEND, HIS EVIL BOUNDLESS, AND HIS VICTIMS WITHOUT NUMBER.

TODAY THAT DARK SHADOW REACHES FURTHER THAN EVER BEFORE IN AN ATTEMPT TO RULE THE WORLD THROUGH ITS PEACEMAKERS. TODAY, FU MANCHU STRIKES AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

FIVE MEN STAND AGAINST THE INSIDIOUS MASTER-MIND AND HIS PLAN. FIVE MARTIAL ARTS MASTERS.

DANNY RAND: WHO HAS LEARNED THE FIGHTING SECRETS OF ANCIENT K'UN-LUN AND FORSAKEN IMMORTALITY TO BATTLE INJUSTICE AS THE COSTUMED HERO CALLED IRON FIST.

LIN SUN, ABE BROWN, BOB DIAMOND: THE STUDENTS OF MASTER KEE, WHOSE INDIVIDUAL SKILLS AND STRENGTHS ARE TRIPLED WHEN THEY JOIN TOGETHER AS THE SONS OF THE TIGER.



SHANG-CHI: MASTER OF KUNG FU, WHOSE BURDEN IS THE HEAVIEST OF ALL, FOR HE IS THE SON OF FU MANCHU!

TONY ISABELLA: SCRIPT

JOHN BUSCEMA: ART

PHIL RACHELSON: COLORS

YOU ARE **DANIEL RAND**, AND YOU WALK THROUGH A NIGHT WHICH BREATHES **DARKNESS** AND **FILTH** WHERE YOU HAD HOPED TO FIND **SOLACE** AND **PEACE**...

...PEACE TO PONDER THE QUESTION OF YOUR **IDENTITY**--AND **MORE**, TO PONDER WHY THAT QUESTION HAS NEVER BEFORE **ARISEN**.

YOU HAVE DEVOTED THE LAST **TEN** OF YOUR **NINETEEN YEARS** TO THE GRUELING PRACTICE OF FORGING YOUR MIND AND BODY INTO A LIVING WEAPON OF **VENGEANCE**... BUT NOW, HAVING **SPURNED** VENGEANCE, YOU FIND YOUR MIND AT **ODDS** WITH YOUR BODY. AND AS YOU PETITION YOUR **SOUL**, YOU FIND THAT PERHAPS THERE IS ONLY **ONE ANSWER**: YOU NO LONGER HAVE A **REASON** FOR EXISTENCE.

AND YET, YOU **KNOW** THE WORLD **MUST** HOLD A PLACE AND A PURPOSE FOR YOU--FOR A MAN WHO HAS LIVED WITH THE SECRETS OF MYSTICAL AND MARTIAL ARTS FOUND ONLY WITHIN THE LEGENDARY **K'UN LUN**.

A full-page illustration of Iron Fist, a man with a yellow mask and a green suit with a yellow sash, running through a city street at night. He is looking back over his shoulder with a determined expression. In the background, there is a city street with a green bus, a yellow taxi, and a sign that says "WET ETE OK". In the foreground, there is a large, blue, metallic-looking object with the word "HELP" written on it in red letters. The scene is lit with dramatic, low-key lighting, emphasizing the darkness of the night.

PERHAPS YOU WILL **FIND** THAT PURPOSE IN THE LOW **MOAN** WHICH ISSUES FROM THE **DEPTHS** OF THIS NIGHT'S **DARKNESS** AND **FILTH**...

DOUG MOENCH
SCRIPT
FRANK McLAUGHLIN
& CRUSTY BUNKERS
ART
PHIL RACHELSON
COLORS

CHAPTER 1: IRON FIST

THE MOAN LEADS TO A MAN SPRAWLED IN **GARBAGE AND PAIN**. FEAR FILLS HIS FEEBLE EYES AS HE PERCEIVES YOUR **COSTUME** THROUGH THE GLOOM...

I SEE... THAT MY CALL FOR AID... HAS ONLY SUMMONED ONE OF THOSE... WHO WOULD KILL ME...

I WON'T KILL YOU--

-- BUT YOU WILL DIE IF I DON'T GET YOU TO A HOSPITAL.

THE MAN WINCES AS YOU PROBE HIS MANY WOUNDS, BUT THEN **URGENCY** FILLS HIS VOICE AS HE GASPS--

NO... THERE IS NO... TIME.

IF YOU ARE NOT... ONE OF THE COSTUMED ASSASSINS... YOU MUST **HELP**... THE OTHERS...

WE HAD... JUST ENTERED OUR HOTEL ROOM... WHEN THE... ASSASSINS BURST IN... ABDUCTED US...

OUTSIDE, THERE WAS... A STRUGGLE...

I WAS INJURED... BUT ESCAPED... AND EVEN NOW... THEY SEARCH FOR ME...

YOU MUST FIND... THE OTHERS... AND FREE THEM BEFORE... IT IS TOO...

I AM... ONE OF THE NEWLY ARRIVED **CHINESE DELEGATES**... TO THE **UNITED NATIONS**. THERE ARE... SIX OF US...

--AH-K-K--

THE MAN SLUMPS FORWARD, HIS DEATH LAID AT YOUR KNEES...

... WALLOWING, STILL, IN THE ECHO OF HIS SELFLESS APPEAL.

YOU RISE FROM HIS LIFELESS FORM--

-- INTO A SILENT LENGTH OF SHADOW...

STEP AWAY FROM
THE ONE WE SEEK--

--OR
SHARE HIS
FATE...

RAGE WELLS WITHIN YOU
LIKE THE WATERS OF A
FLOOD, AND YOU ASSUME
THE CAT STANCE OF
DEFENSE...

YOUR
COSTUME
SPEAKS OF
VANITY...

--BUT YOUR
STANCE CRIES
KNOWLEDGE...

...AT THE HANDS
OF SEO-KAI-CHEN,
HE-WHO-STRIKES-
THE-LIGHTNING!

...READY TO FACE THIS
ASSASSIN WHO WOULD
MURDER A MAN ALREADY
DEAD.

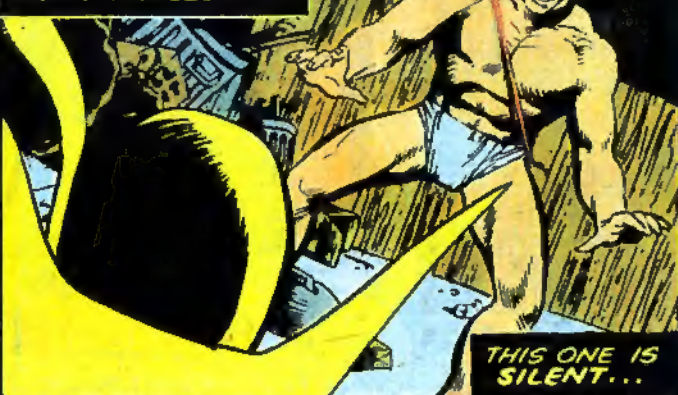
...AND THEN YOU SURGE
FORWARD, YOUR FIST
STREAKING UP TO DELIVER
THE SMASHING BLOW OF
THE HAMMER.

AND YET, BOTH
WILL FALL BEFORE
THE POWER OF THE
LIGHTNING
STRIKER!!

YOU WAIT AS THE ASSASSIN
RAISES HIS WEAPON TO ITS
FULL HEIGHT...

HIS WEAPON
SHATTERS...
AND HE FALLS
BACK,
STUNNED.

YOU SPIN AWAY FROM
YOUR FIRST OPPO-
NENT, DROPPING INTO
A CROUCH TO CON-
FRONT THE SECOND.



THIS ONE IS
SILENT...

...AND
WISELY
CAUTIOUS.

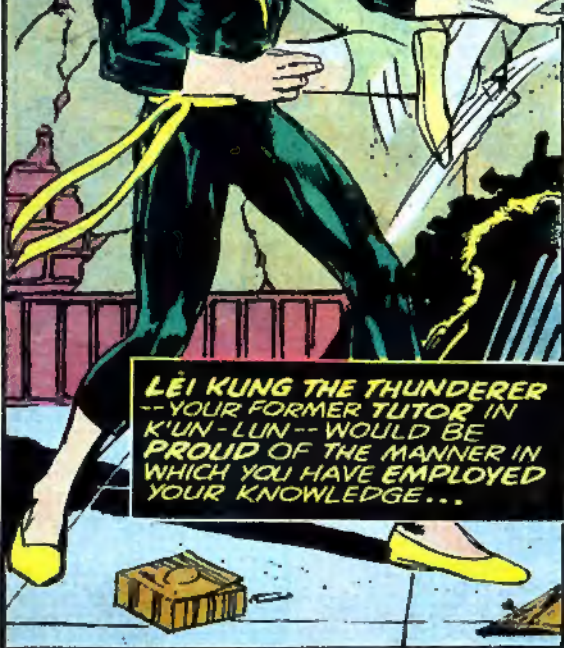


TIME GROWS HEAVY AS YOU
FACE ONE ANOTHER, EACH
ASSESSING THE OTHER'S
STRENGTH. YOU LEARN
MUCH FROM HIS SIMPLE
STANCE...

YOU LEARN, FOR INSTANCE,
THAT HE WILL NOT EXPECT
THE UPWARD SWEEP OF
YOUR LIGHTNING KICK...



...FOR HE HAS
LEARNED NO-
THING FROM
YOUR STANCE.



LEI KUNG THE THUNDERER
--YOUR FORMER TUTOR IN
K'UN-LUN-- WOULD BE
PROUD OF THE MANNER IN
WHICH YOU HAVE EMPLOYED
YOUR KNOWLEDGE...

...BUT WOULD
CONSIDER THE
TRIAL OF YOUR
THIRD AND FINAL
OPPONENT--



--ELEMENTARY.



THE BATTLE HAS BEEN **SWIFT**,
AND **FAR LESS THAN DEADLY**...



-- YOU WOULD HAVE DEFEATED YOUR **PURPOSE**,
AS WELL AS YOUR **OPPONENTS**.

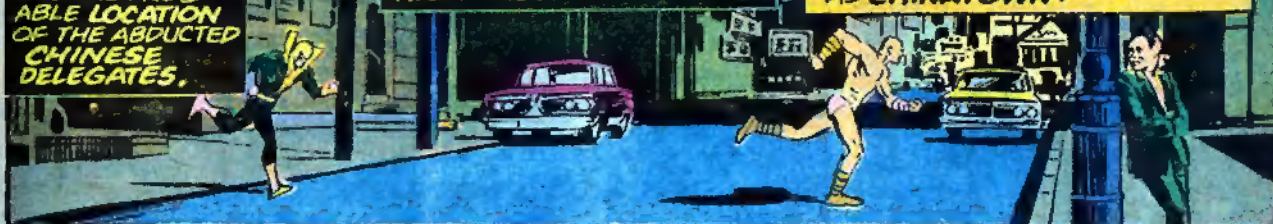


-- IN ONE WHO MIGHT LEAD YOU TO HIS **SANCTUARY**...
AND THE PROB-
ABLE LOCATION
OF THE ABDUCTED
CHINESE
DELEGATES.

SUCH A ONE IS SEO-KAI-CHEN... A MAN WHO IS APPARENTLY UNPREPARED TO STRIKE THE LIGHTNING

...WITHOUT A WEAPON IN HIS GRASP...

...AND A MAN WHO NOW RACES THROUGH THE DARKNESS AND FILTH OF MANHATTAN'S NIGHT STREETS TO THE SECTOR KNOWN AS CHINATOWN.



YOU HAVE CONDUCTED THE **FINAL LEG** OF YOUR PURSUIT IN **STEALTH**, AND THEREFORE **CONVINCED** THE ASSASSIN OF HIS SUCCESS IN **ELUDING** YOU, EVEN AS HE APPROACHES THE **REAR ENTRANCE** OF A **RAM-SHACKLE WAREHOUSE**...

PITY FOR A **BLIND MAN**...?



OUT OF MY WAY, **BEGGER!**



SEO-KAI-CHEN ENTERS THE ANCIENT WAREHOUSE, AND YOU ABANDON YOUR STEALTH... EMERGING FROM THE SHADOWS TO AID THE STRICKEN BLIND MAN.

THERE IS TIME NOW, FOR YOU HAVE LOCATED YOUR **OBJECTIVE**...





TSU-GAMO!!

WE WERE
ATTACKED BY
A MADMAN! I
ALONE ESCAPED
HIS FURY!

YOU HAVE FAILED
TO FULFILL OUR
MASTER'S WISHES,
SEO-KAI-CHEN?!

HE WILL BE
MOST
DISPLEASED..



... AND HE
WILL DOUBTLESS
REQUIRE YOUR
LIFE!

YOU CLIMB
TOWARD THE
SOUND OF VOICES...

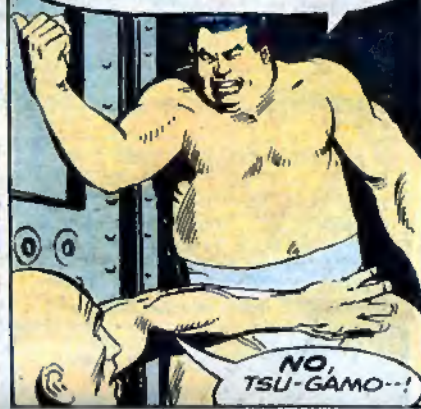


...RAISED IN ANGER.

THUS, YOU MUST
THANK ME FOR THE
DEATH I SHALL NOW
GRANT YOU...

...FOR WHEN THE MASTER
FINDS ONLY FIVE OF THE SIX
DELEGATES BEHIND THAT
DOOR--

--THE DEATH HE WOULD
GRANT WOULD BE CONSIDER-
ABLY LESS PLEASANT.



NO,
TSU-GAMO--!



YOUR ENTRANCE
IS ABRUPT...

...AND YET
YOU FIND
THAT SEO-KAI-
CHEN WILL
NEVER AGAIN
STRIKE THE
LIGHTENING.

SNAP!

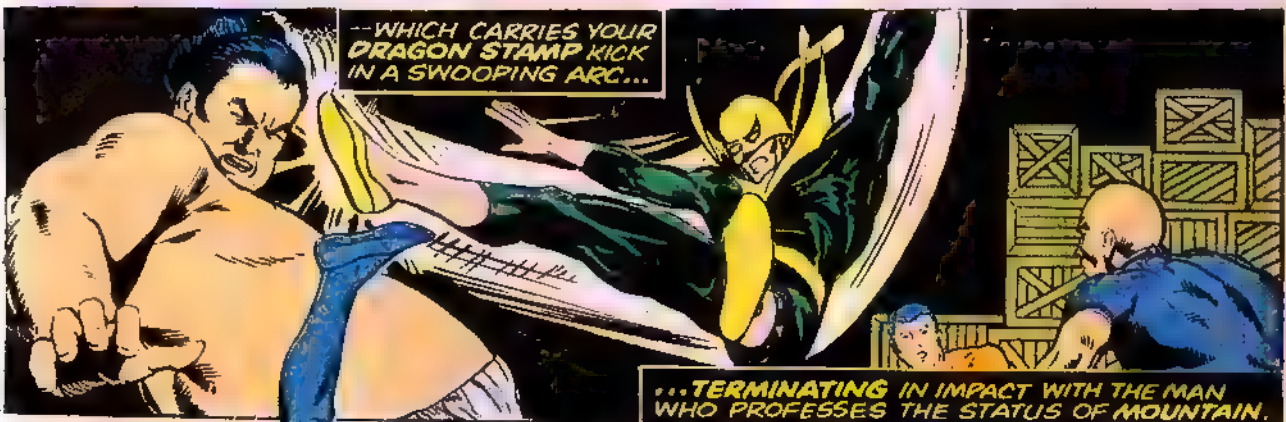
TSU-GAMO--THE INTRUDER;
HE MUST BE THE MADMAN
CHEN SPOKE OF!

YES, BUT
EVEN MADMEN
BREATHE-- AND
EVEN MADMEN FALL
BEFORE TSU-GAMO,
THE MOUNTAIN-
WHICH-STEALS-
BREATH!



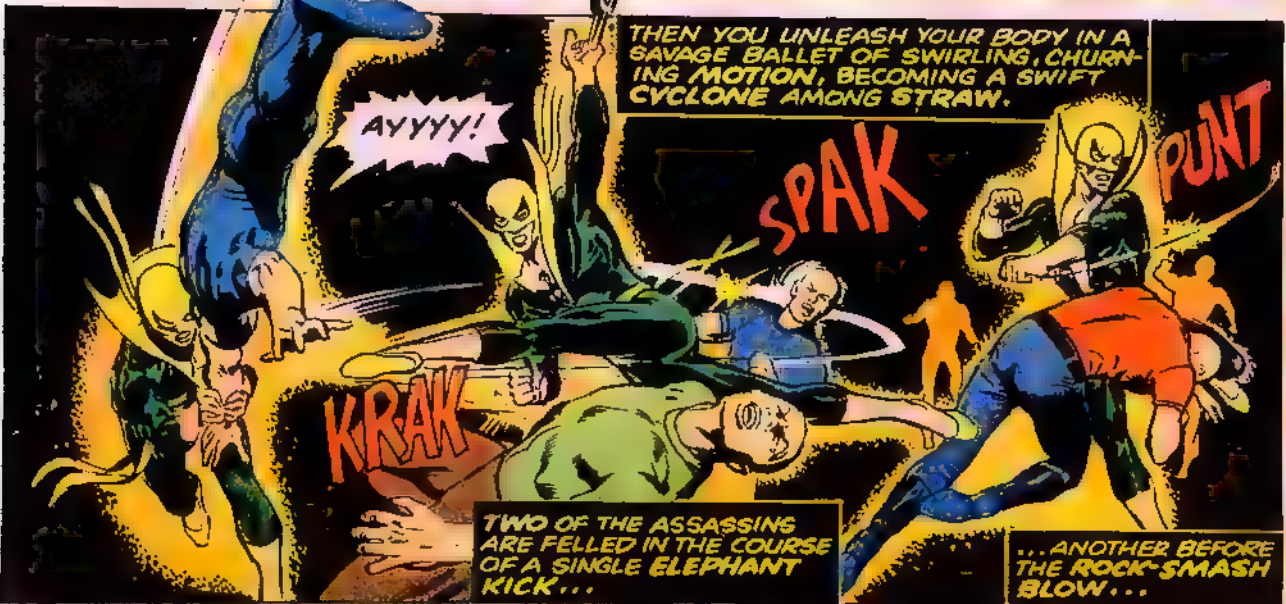
YOU LEAVE THE WINDOW BEHIND YOU, TO HURTLE ABOVE THE HEADS OF THE PANICKED ASSASSINS... AND THERE YOU GRAB A DANGLING ROPE --

STOP HIM!!



--WHICH CARRIES YOUR DRAGON STAMP KICK IN A SWOOPING ARC...

...TERMINATING IN IMPACT WITH THE MAN WHO PROFFERS THE STATUS OF MOUNTAIN.



AYYYY!

THEN YOU UNLEASH YOUR BODY IN A SAVAGE BALLET OF SWIRLING, CHURNING MOTION, BECOMING A SWIFT CYCLONE AMONG STRAW.

KRAK

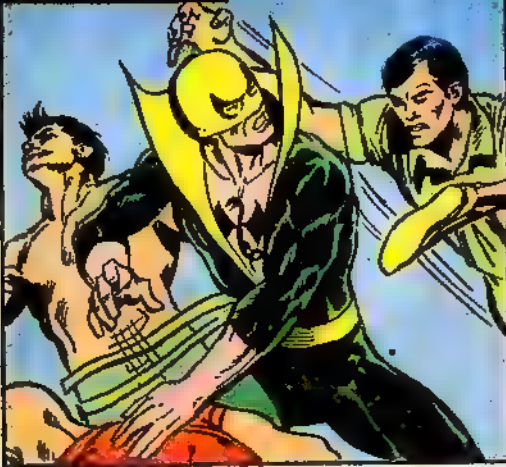
SPAK

PUNT

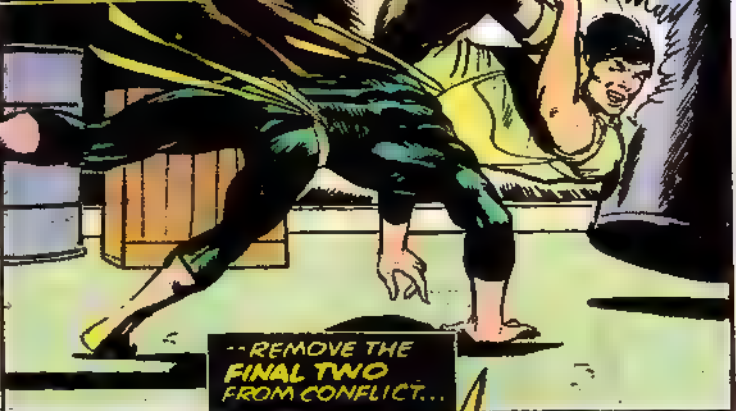
TWO OF THE ASSASSIN ARE FELLED IN THE COURSE OF A SINGLE ELEPHANT KICK...

... ANOTHER BEFORE THE ROCK-SMASH BLOW...

THE MONKEY-BLOW--

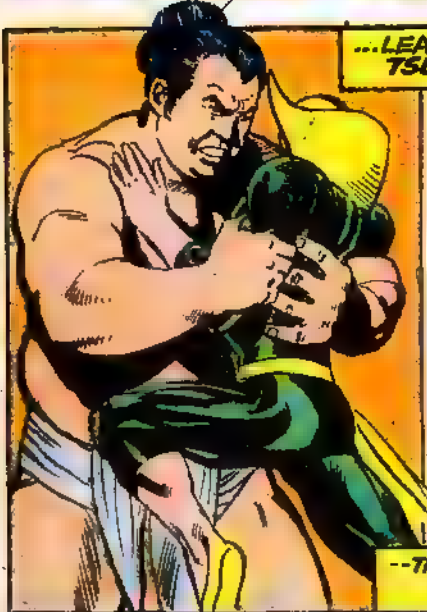


--AND A SIMPLE EVASIVE MANEUVER--



--REMOVE THE FINAL TWO FROM CONFLICT--

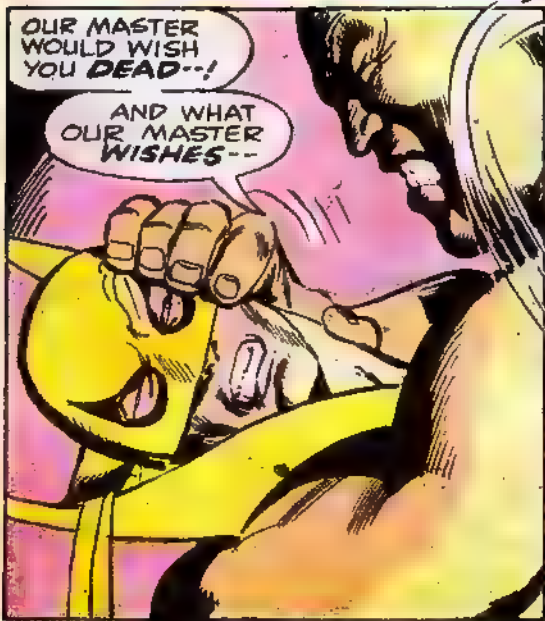
...LEAVING ONLY TSU-GAMO--



--THE MOUNTAIN-WHICH STEALS-BREATH!

OUR MASTER WOULD WISH YOU DEAD--!

AND WHAT OUR MASTER WISHES--



SMACK

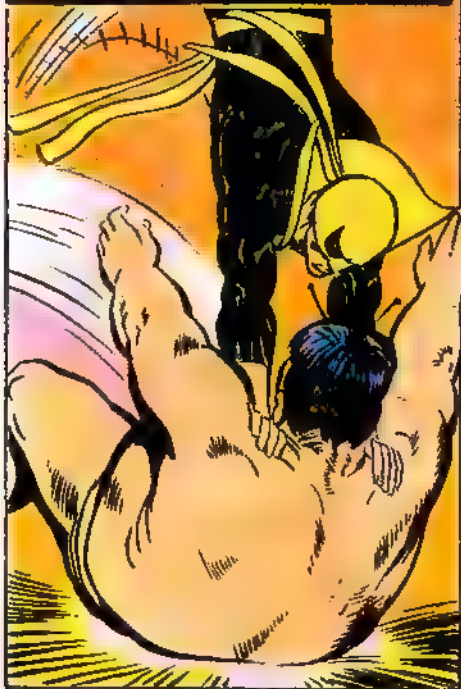
AHRRR!!

MAK

THE MAMMOTH SUMO BREAKS HIS RIB-CRUSHING HOLD, FREEING YOU TO GULP STOLEN BREATH.



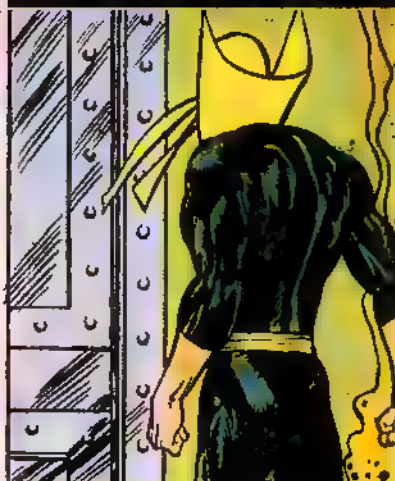
OFF-BALANCE, IN THE THROES OF PAIN, TSU-GAMO IS EASILY BORNE TO THE FLOOR--



--AND DISPATCHED WITH A SHARP CHOP TO THE NECK.



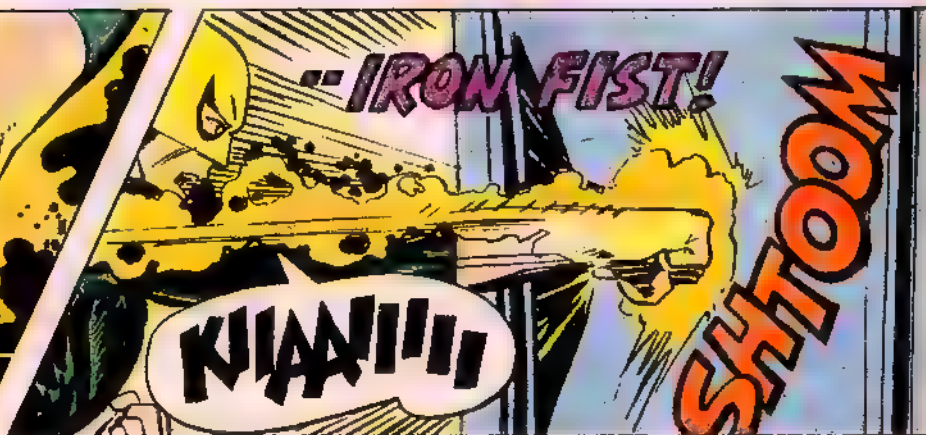
YOU RISE FROM THE FALLEN SUMO, AND YOUR EYES SURVEY THE FACE OF A SOLID STEEL-RIVETED DOOR.



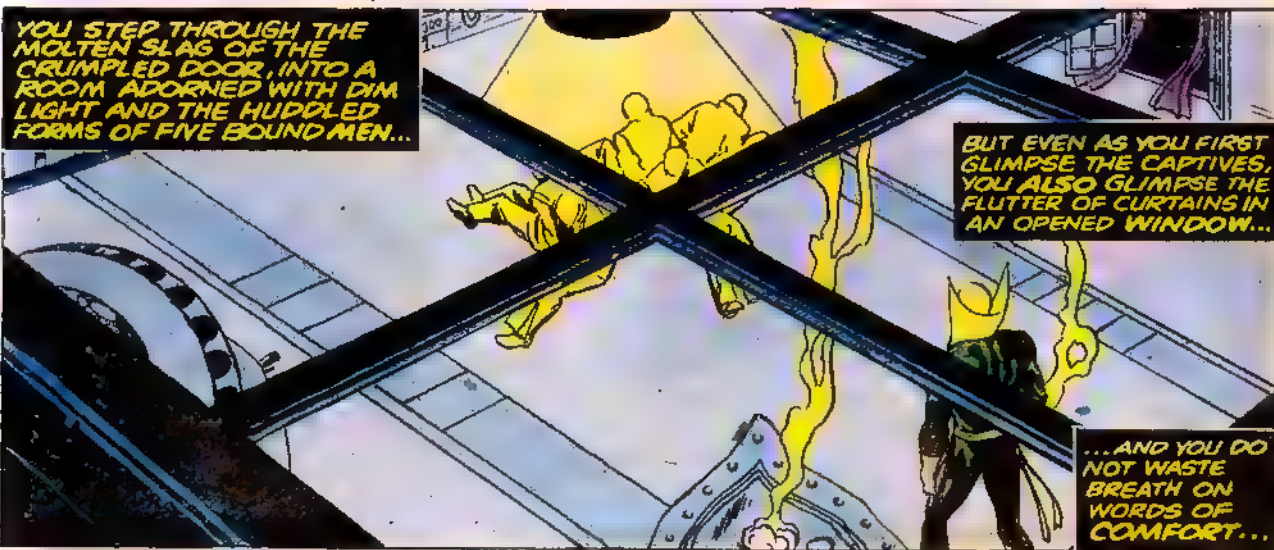
YOU ASSESS THE DOOR'S STRENGTH, EVEN AS YOU HAVE GAUGED THE STRENGTH OF A DOZEN FOES THIS NIGHT... AND YOU REALIZE THAT IF YOU ARE TO REACH THE CAPTIVE DELEGATES BEHIND THIS DOOR--



--YOU MUST INVOKE THE SEETHING POWER OF--



YOU STEP THROUGH THE MOLTEN SLAG OF THE CRUMPLED DOOR, INTO A ROOM ADORNED WITH DIM LIGHT AND THE HUDDLED FORMS OF FIVE BOUND MEN...



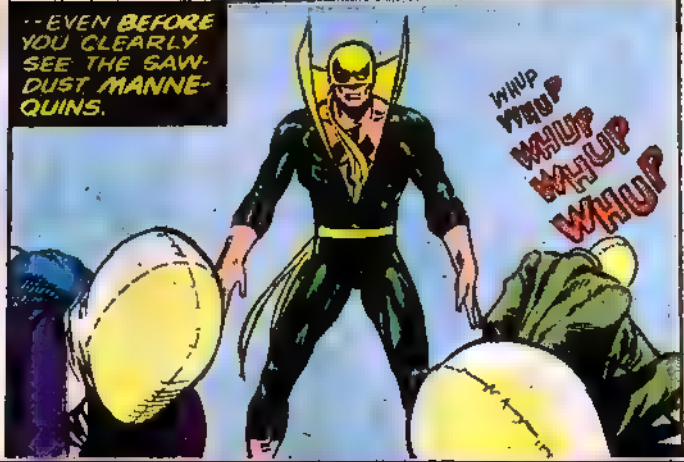
BUT EVEN AS YOU FIRST GLIMPSE THE CAPTIVES, YOU ALSO GLIMPSE THE FLUTTER OF CURTAINS IN AN OPENED WINDOW...

...AND YOU DO NOT WASTE BREATH ON WORDS OF COMFORT...

...FOR YOU HAVE ALREADY ASCERTAINED THAT SUCH WORDS WOULD FALL ON DEAF EARS--



--EVEN BEFORE YOU CLEARLY SEE THE SAW-DUST MANNE-QUINS.



WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

THEN, A SOUND CURLS THROUGH THE OPENED WINDOW, CARRIED BY A SHIFT IN BREEZE...

AND WHEN YOU CROSS TO THE WINDOW, YOU REALIZE THAT WHILE YOU HAVE DEFEATED MANY FOES THIS FATEFUL NIGHT, YOUR TRUE OPPONENT HAS BEEN TOO CUNNING TO RAISE A HAND AGAINST YOU...



...A MAN YOU HAVE NEVER EVEN SEEN...

THE SOUNDS RECEDE INTO SILENCE AS YOU NOTICE A BATTERED TIN CUP...



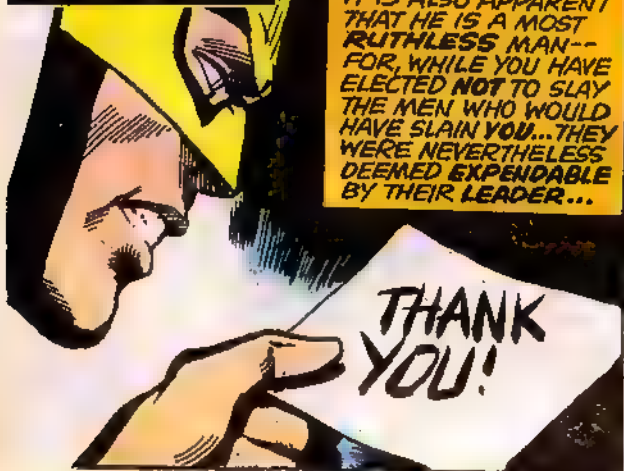
...MUCH LIKE THE ONE EXTENDED BY THE OLD BLIND MAN.

...AND A MAN WHO MUST PLAY FOR DESPERATE ODDS INDEED, TO MAKE A GAME OF KIDNAPPING.

BUT RATHER THAN COINS OF PITY, IT NOW CONTAINS A NOTE OF CONTEMPT.

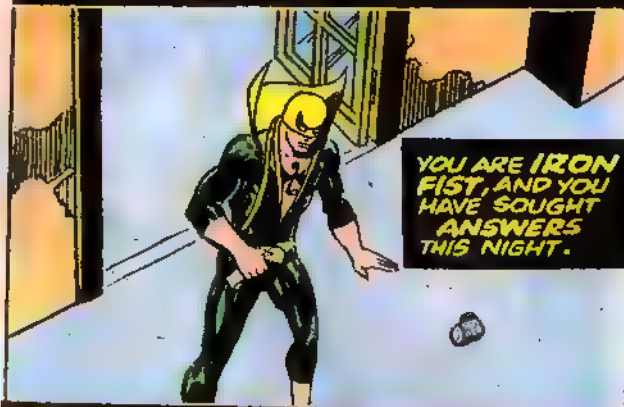
THE MESSAGE IS SIMPLY STATED, AND ONE WHICH REVEALS MUCH ABOUT THE NATURE OF ITS AUTHOR.

IT SEEMS YOU HAVE MET YOUR TRUE OPPONENT...AND, IN FACT, GIVEN HIM AID. IT IS ALSO APPARENT THAT HE IS A MOST RUTHLESS MAN--FOR, WHILE YOU HAVE ELECTED NOT TO SLAY THE MEN WHO WOULD HAVE SLAIN YOU...THEY WERE NEVERTHELESS DEEMED EXPENDABLE BY THEIR LEADER...



THANK YOU!

...A MAN WHO WOULD THINK NOTHING OF SACRIFICING A DOZEN LIVES TO THE CAUSE OF A MERE DIVERSIONARY TACTIC... WHILE HE TRANSPORTED THE KIDNAPPED DELEGATES TO THEIR ACTUAL DESTINATION.



YOU ARE IRON FIST, AND YOU HAVE SOUGHT ANSWERS THIS NIGHT.

BUT WHILE YOU HAVE NOT YET LEARNED THAT THERE IS A PURPOSE TO YOUR LIFE... YOU HAVE LEARNED THAT YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN.

KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:

THEY CALLED IT **IDLE**:
WILD BACK IN THE
DAYS WHEN PLANES
FLEW COAST-TO-
COAST IN 12
HOURS AND
ROCK 'N'
ROLL WAS
HERE TO STAY!



NOWADAYS, TIMES--AND TASTES--HAVE
CHANGED. PEOPLE FLY BY JET NOW, AND
THEY STUDY THE MARTIAL ARTS.



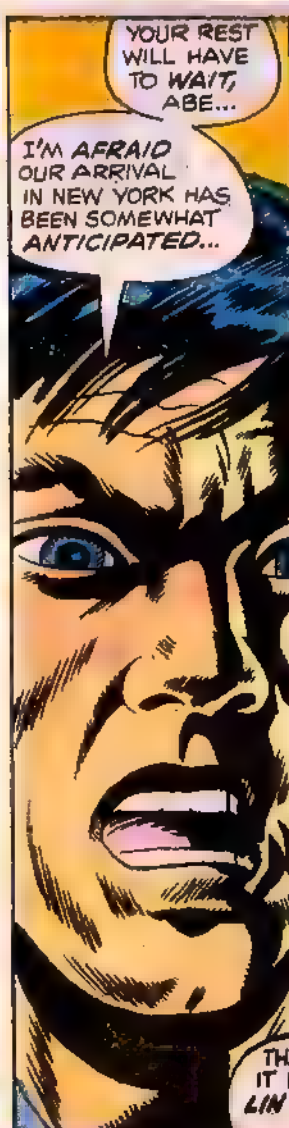
AND,
OCCASIONALLY,
THEY HOLD
TOURNAMENTS...

...SUCH AS THE **MARIS INVITATIONAL**,
IN NEW YORK, JOKINGLY CALLED "**THE**
WORLD SERIES OF KUNG FU!"

MAN, I AM **BEAT!** OL'
ABE COULD REALLY USE
SOME **SHUT-EYE**
RIGHT AB...

CHAPTER 2:

THE SONS OF THE TIGER!



YOUR REST
WILL HAVE
TO WAIT,
ABE...

I'M AFRAID
OUR ARRIVAL
IN NEW YORK
HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT
ANTICIPATED...



YOU HAVE
INTERFERED
ONCE TOO OFTEN
IN THE AFFAIRS OF
THE **SILENT**
ONES...

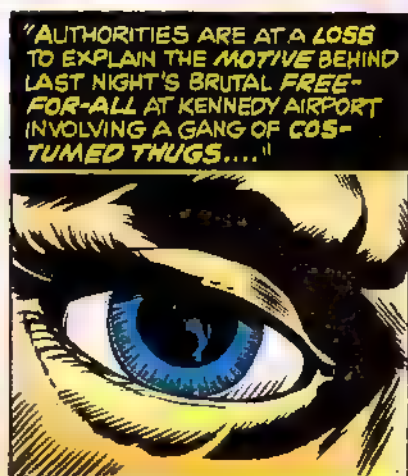
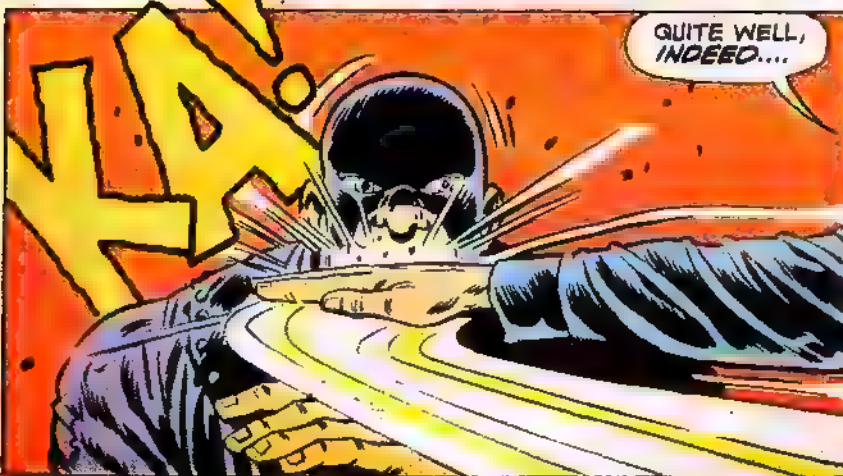
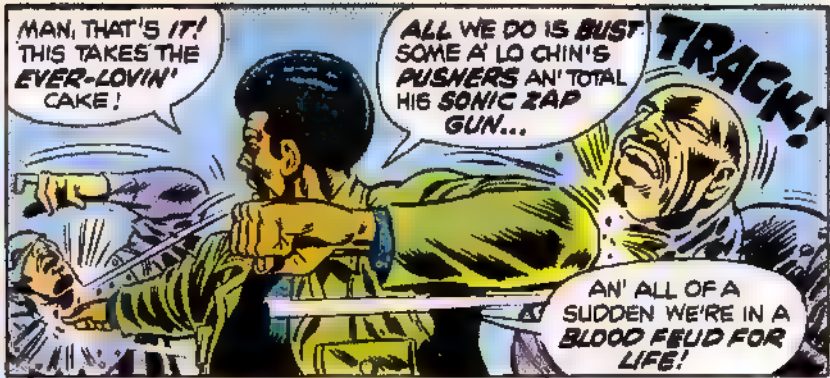
...FOR THAT,
YOU MUST
PAY!

THAT
IT HAS,
LIN SUN!



AT LO CHIN'S
COMMAND,
YOU DIE!

HOYYY-A!



"AUTHORITIES ARE AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN THE MOTIVE BEHIND LAST NIGHT'S BRUTAL FREE-FOR-ALL AT KENNEDY AIRPORT INVOLVING A GANG OF COSTUMED THUGS...."

HOWEVER, ONE POLICE SPOKESMAN DID SAY THAT IT WAS **OBVIOUSLY** THE WORK OF **ORGANIZED CRIME**.

"ORGANIZED CRIME?" MAN, THAT'S RICH!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. I JUST DON'T BELIEVE IT! WE TRAIN A FULL MONTH FOR THIS TOURNAMENT, FLY SEVEN HOURS ON A **CROWD-ED** JET TO GET HERE....

WE GET DAWN NEAR **MURDERED** THE MINUTE WE SET FOOT ON THE **GROUND**...

THE REST OF THE NIGHT IS **SHOT** COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK POLICE...

AND THE **FIRST** THING LIN DOES WHEN WE GET TO OUR HOTEL IS TURN THE T.V. ON...

...AND WATCH IT HAPPEN **ALL** OVER AGAIN! MAN YOU'RE ... **INCREDIBLE**!

I JUST HAPPEN TO LIKE THE NEWS...

I GIVE UP. I'M GON' TO **BED!** GOOD MORNING!

THE TIME IS 8:03 AM AND HERE IS TODAY'S **TOP STORY**: CHINA'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, **LEE TSAING-WA**, AGAIN ATTACKED THE **UNITED STATES**, STATING THAT THE...

DISAPPEARANCE OF MY COUNTRY'S **ENTIRE UNITED NATIONS MISSION** IS AN ACT OF **MONSTROUS** INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM! THE **PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA** HOLDS THE **UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FULLY RESPONSIBLE** FOR THEIR **SAFE RECOVERY**...

STRANGE... **EVERY** TIME I SEE **LEE TSAING-WA**, MY **TIGER MEDALION** **TINGLES**...

NO...IT'S **IMPOSSIBLE**. CHINA'S DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER--ONE OF THE **SILENT ONES**--AND **YET**...



WHY NOT LEE
TSAING-WA?
CORRUPTION IN
HIGH PLACES
SEEMS TO BE THE
NORM THESE DAYS
...WHAT ARE THEY
SAYING NOW?

...AN
EMERGENCY
SESSION OF THE
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY HAS
BEEN CALLED FOR
10 A.M. TODAY...



TEN A.M. NOT
MUCH TIME...

ABE... BOB...
WAKE UP!



I SAID,
WAKE UP!
WE'RE GOING
TO THE
UN.

SON
OF A...

THANKS
A LOT,
BUDDY.



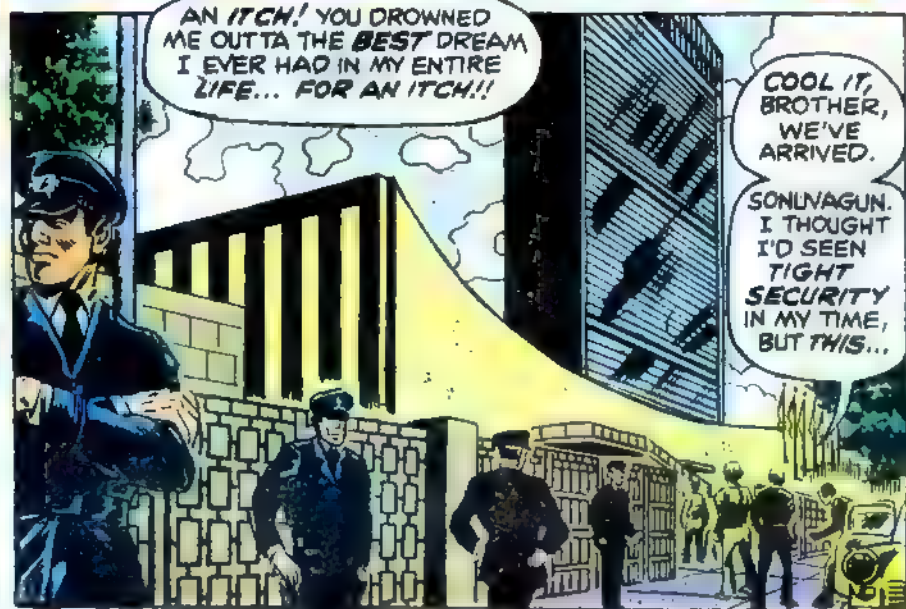
OKAY, THE
MEDALLION'S
CLUED YOU IN
TO SOMETHIN'
SCREWY
GOIN' DOWN
AT THE
UN.

WHAT?!



I DON'T KNOW. THE
MEDALLION DIDN'T
GIVE ANY SPECIFICS,
JUST AN... ITCH...

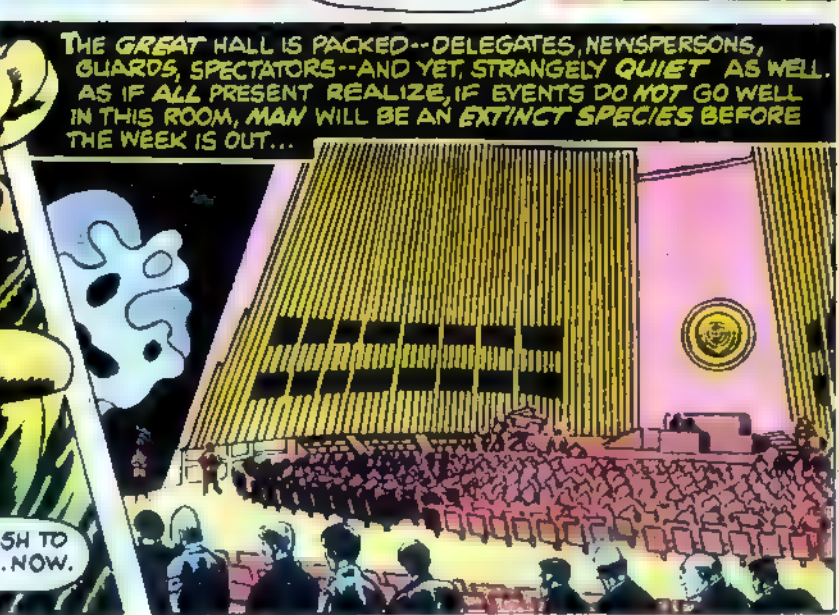
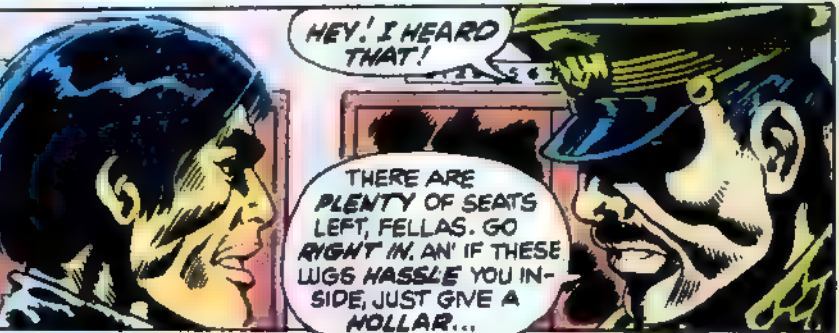
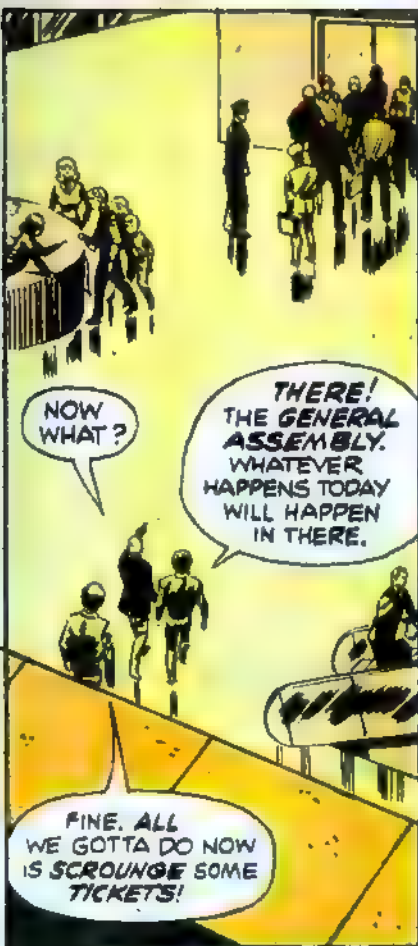
OHHH NO.



AN ITCH! YOU DROWNED
ME OUTTA THE BEST DREAM
I EVER HAD IN MY ENTIRE
LIFE... FOR AN ITCH!!

COOL IT,
BROTHER,
WE'VE
ARRIVED.

SONINAGUN.
I THOUGHT
I'D SEEN
TIGHT
SECURITY
IN MY TIME,
BUT THIS...

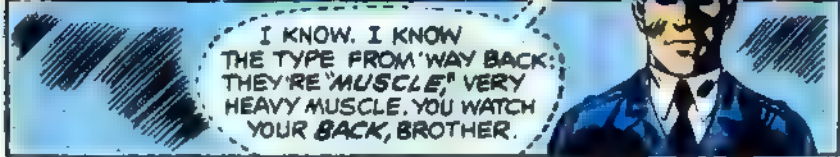


PSST! GET A LOAD OF THE HEAVIES IN THE BACK ROW. WHAT SEWER DID THEY CRAWL OUT OF?



SHHH!

I KNOW. I KNOW THE TYPE FROM WAY BACK. THEY'RE "MUSCLE," VERY HEAVY MUSCLE. YOU WATCH YOUR BACK, BROTHER.



AND I SAY THAT IF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT CAN NOT GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF CHINESE DIPLOMATS IN AMERICA, THEN CHINA WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS IN CHINA...



CALM DOWN, TSAING-WA. THIS IS NO TIME FOR HISTRIONICS. YOU'RE ONLY MAKING THINGS WORSE...



HUINH? THAT MAN BEHIND ME...WHAT'S HE DOING?



HE'S THE ONE WHO DIDN'T WANT TO LET US IN...

AND HE'S BEEN FIDGETING AND LOOKING AT HIS WATCH SINCE WE SAT DOWN...



THE MAN'S LOOKING IN MY DIRECTION... WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?!

LIN'S REVERIE IS SHATTERED IN MID-SENTENCE AS THE BEARDED LASCAR SPRINGS TO HIS FEET AND ELBOWS HIS WAY TO THE BALCONY RAIL...



ASSAULT GROUP A!

NOW!

HEAR ME, COMRADES! ATTACK IN
THE NAME OF MAO-TSE-TUNG
AND THE GLORIOUS CHINESE
PEOPLE!

ATTACK! AND
DESTROY THE
WARMONGERING
AMERICAN
FASCISTS!

DO NOT
MOVE, FOOLS!
WE WILL NOT
HESITATE TO
KILL YOU!

ARE THESE GUYS
FOR REAL? "WAR-
MONGERING... FASCISTS?"
HEY, LIN, THEY'RE HEADING
FOR THE AMERICAN
DELEGATION!

AND SO SHALL WE,
ROBERT. BUT FIRST WE
MUST DEAL WITH SOME
SMALL PROBLEMS
OF OUR OWN.



ALONE, EACH MEMBER OF THE TEAM IS A **SUPERB**, ALMOST UNBEATABLE MARTIAL ARTIST...

AS ONE, THEY'LL FIGHT THEIR WILL BE DONE...

FOR EACH IS BORN ANEW... THE TIGER'S SON!

BUT NOW, WITH THREE MASTERS FUNCTIONING AS ONE, THE SONS OF THE TIGER ARE DEADLY BEYOND BELIEF!

WHEN THREE ARE CALLED AND STAND AS ONE...

CHII-AH!

MARCEL! LOOK AT THEM! THAT INSANE TRIO IS DESTROYING OUR SI-FAN CADRE...

HOW COULD EVEN FU MANCHU...

SILENCE, DOG! WE PLAY CHINESE AGENTS TODAY!

AND MENTION OUR MASTER'S NAME AGAIN AND I'LL STRANGLE YOU MYSELF!

IT'S A BRILLIANT PLAN, ONE WORTHY OF FU MANCHU...

SI-FAN AGENTS DISGUISED AS CHINESE DELEGATES KIDNAP THE AMERICAN UN DELEGATION. SUCH AN OPEN ATTACK COULD ONLY LEAD TO WAR.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THEN ALL ONE HAS TO DO IS SIT BACK AND WAIT FOR THE **SUPER-POWERS** TO DESTROY THEMSELVES...

KAH!!

THIS IS CRAZY. THE CHINESE DELEGATES ARE FIGHTING US. WHAT'S...

FU MANCHU WILL RULE WHAT'S LEFT.

LIN! BOB! LOOK! THE U.S. DELEGATION'S BEING KIDNAPPED!

BEING KIDNAPPED BY CHINESE...

BUT THAT'S INSANE... UNBELIEVABLE.

INSANE, LIN SUN? PERHAPS,
BUT IT'S HAPPENING ANYWAY.

MOVE IT!
MOVE IT!
WE'RE BEHIND
SCHEDULE!

KILL ANYONE
WHO GETS IN
OUR WAY!

THEY'RE
GETTING
AWAY!

THAT SO, BABE?
OKAY, FELLA, PLAY-
TIME'S OVER!

CHA-PON!

THOSE GUYS AREN'T GONNA
GET FAR. THERE MUST BE
HALF THE US ARMY
WAITING OUT THERE FOR
THEM BY NOW.

TRUE ENOUGH, BOB DIAMOND--
BEFORE THE ASSAULT. BUT THE
MINUTES SINCE THEN HAVE BEEN
A SWIRLING MAELSTORM OF
CONFUSION, FEAR AND PANIC!

IT'S A NIGHTMARE. AND LIKE ANY
NIGHTMARE, THE PEOPLE WHO GET HURT
THE MOST ARE THE ONES WHO LEAST
DESERVE IT, THE INNOCENT
BYSTANDERS...

AND INTO THIS MESS
CHARGE THE SONS OF
THE TIGER...

WHERE'D
THEY GO?



THERE!

HELICOPTERS!
THEY HAD
HELICOPTERS!

WE COULD
HAVE STOPPED
THEM IF WE'D
GOTTEN OUT
FASTER!

COOL
OFF, LIN.
WE DID
OUR
BEST.

AND FOR WHAT
IT WAS WORTH,
WE GOT MOST OF
THEM. THAT SHOULD
COUNT FOR SOME-
THING....



SHOULD IT?
I WONDER...

SIR, ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT? YOU WERE NEARLY
TRAMPLED BY THE CROWD!
CAN I CALL A DOCTOR..



NO, NO, THANK YOU. I
AM QUITE WELL... JUST
A BIT SHAKEN UP
IS ALL...

LOOK, I-- WE--
GOT SOME SPARE
CHANGE. YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU CAN
USE IT.



THANK YOU,
MY SON. YOU ARE
MOST KIND. LIVE
LONG, YOUNG SIR,
LIVE WELL.

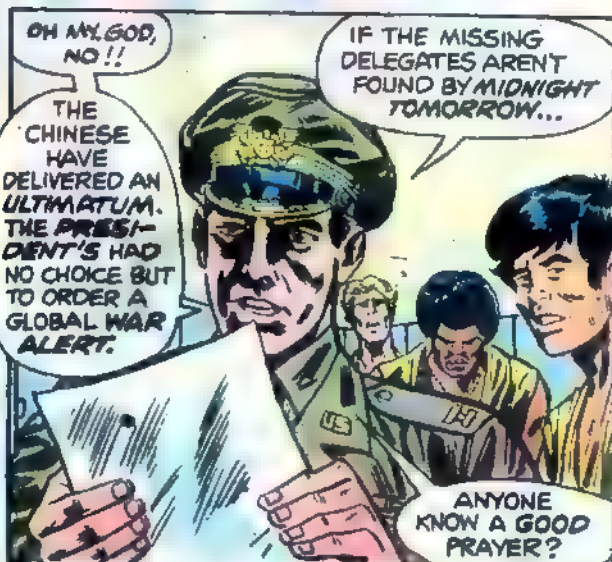
WHILE
YOU HAVE
THE
CHANCE.



LATER, WHEN THINGS HAVE QUIETED
DOWN A BIT.

OKAY, GENTLEMEN,
THANKS FOR YOUR
HELP...

SIR?



OH MY GOD,
NO!!

THE
CHINESE
HAVE
DELIVERED AN
ULTIMATUM.
THE PRES-
IDENT'S HAD
NO CHOICE BUT
TO ORDER A
GLOBAL WAR
ALERT.

IF THE MISSING
DELEGATES AREN'T
FOUND BY MIDNIGHT
TOMORROW...

ANYONE
KNOW A GOOD
PRAYER?

CHAPTER 3:

THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU

"NATURE CREATED THE WORLD TO BE ONE WITH ITSELF, THE WATERS NOURISHING THE LAND, THE AIR BREATHING UNIFORM LIFE TO THE WHOLE OF ITS SURFACE

"BUT MAN DIVIDED THE WORLD WITH NONEXISTENT BORDERS SPLIT THE WHOLE INTO FRAGMENTED REGIONS CALLED NATIONS... AND THE WORLD SUFFERED.

"AND WHERE THE WORLD SUFFERED, MAN SUFFERED... AND MAN DIED, ATTEMPTING TO SHAPE HIS NATION INTO AN ENTITY GREATER THAN THE REST OF THE WORLD.

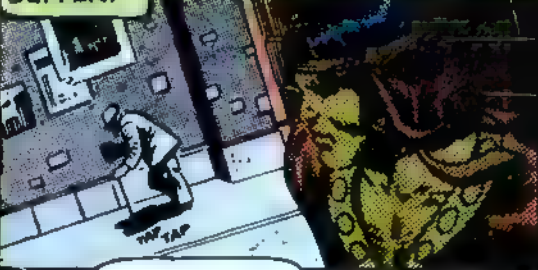
"BUT SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH HAS TOLD ME OF AN ORGANIZATION CALLED THE UNITED NATIONS. ITS NAME IS FALSE, FOR IT DOES NOT ATTEMPT TO UNITE THE WORLD INTO A WHOLE... AND YET IT DOES ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE SUFFERING BY RESOLVING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WORLD'S DIVIDED REGIONS.



"AND NOW THE UNITED NATIONS ITSELF HAS BEEN DIVIDED..."

"FOR THIS REASON, I HAVE COME TO THE OFFICE BUILDING WHICH DISGUISES FU MANCHU'S NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS.

"I MUST SPEAK WITH MY FATHER, AND LEARN IF IT IS HE WHO HAS DIVIDED THE UNITED NATIONS... AND WISHES TO MAKE THE WORLD SUFFER.



OOOPS. SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO TAP YOUR FOOT...

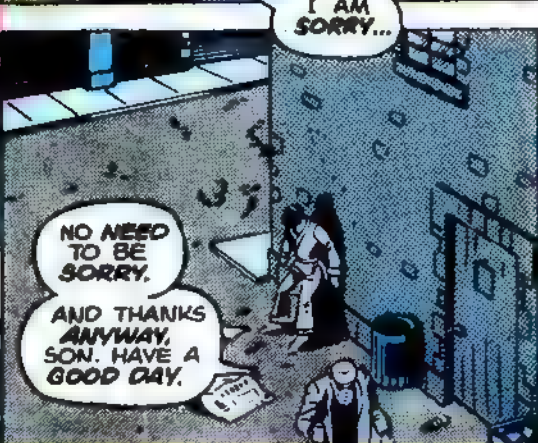


BUT CAN YOU SPARE A DIME FOR A BLIND MAN?



I HAVE NO... MONEY.

I AM SORRY...

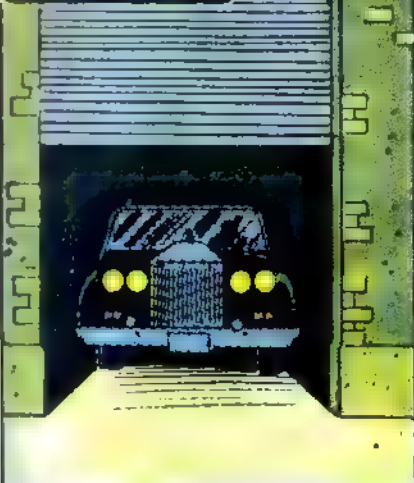


NO NEED TO BE SORRY.

AND THANKS ANYWAY, SON. HAVE A GOOD DAY.

DOUG MOENCH: SCRIPT / MIKE VOSBURG & DAN ADKINS: ART / PHIL RACHELSON: COLORS

"A LIMOUSINE
EMERGING FROM
MY FATHER'S
HEADQUARTERS..."



"...FOLLOWED
BY A
SECOND ONE."



"THE WINDOWS OF BOTH
ARE DARKENED."

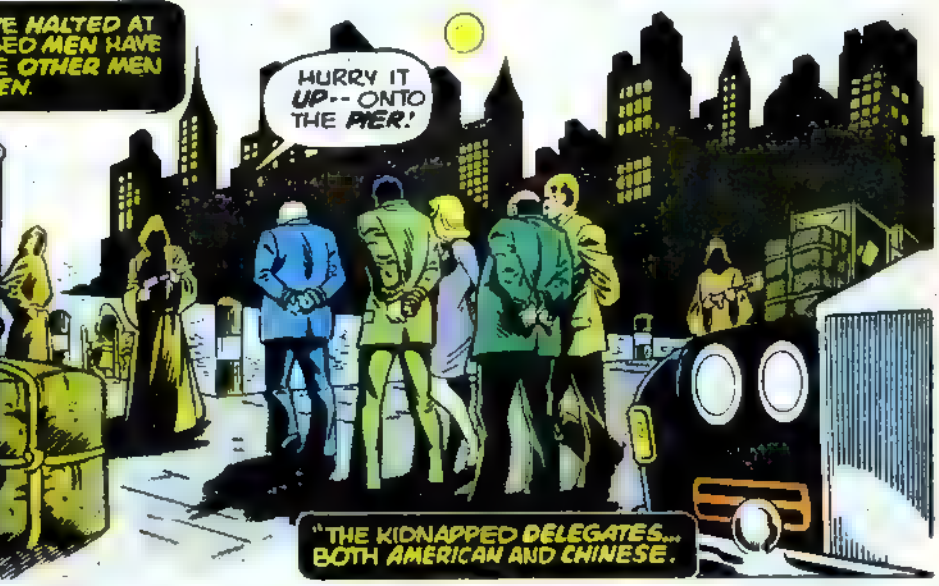


"I WOULD LEARN WHY."

"THE LIMOUSINES HAVE HALTED AT
THE DOCKS, AND ROBED MEN HAVE
DEBARKED... TO DRIVE OTHER MEN
AS IF THEY WERE OXEN."



"HURRY IT
UP-- ONTO
THE PIER!"



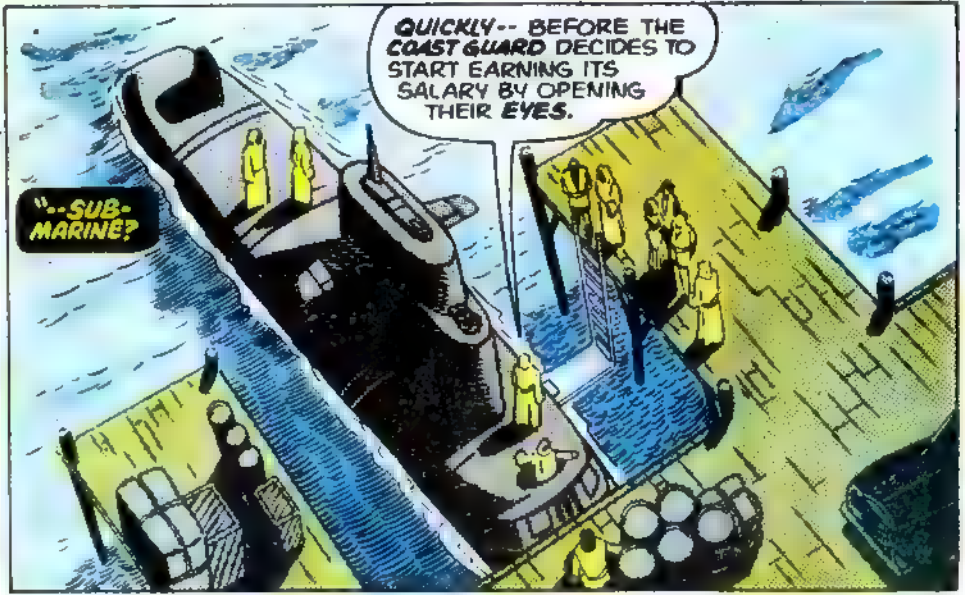
"THE KIDNAPPED DELEGATES...
BOTH AMERICAN AND CHINESE."

"THEY ARE BEING
FORCED FROM THE
PIER DOWN TO A--"



"QUICKLY-- BEFORE THE
COAST GUARD DECIDES TO
START EARNING ITS
SALARY BY OPENING
THEIR EYES."

"--SUB-
MARINE?"



"I MUST ALSO BOARD
THIS SUBMARINE."



"SECRETLY."

SHHHHUP!



COME ON-- YOU'RE
THE LAST ONE.



WHAT'S
TAKING
YOU SO
LONG?



DON'T
FORGET TO
FASTEN THAT
HATCH BEHIND
YOU.

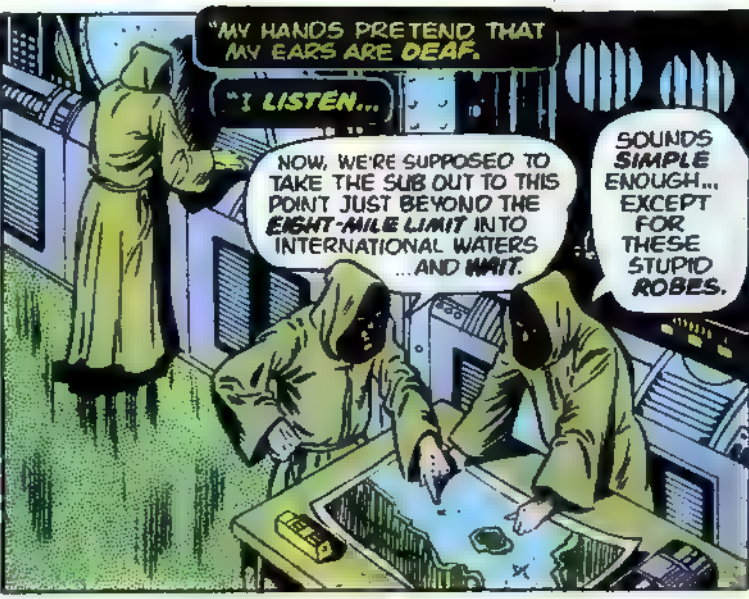


"MY HANDS PRETEND THAT
MY EARS ARE DEAF."

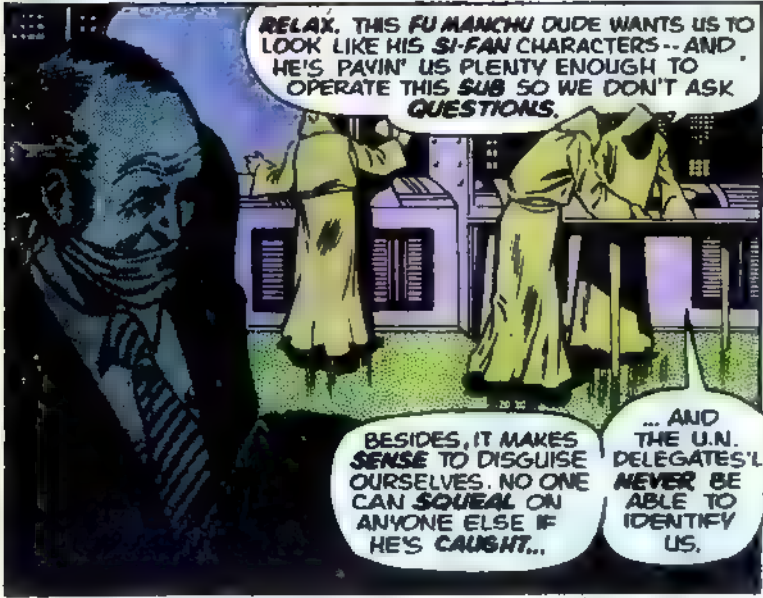
"I LISTEN..."

NOW, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO
TAKE THE SUB OUT TO THIS
POINT JUST BEYOND THE
EIGHT-MILE LIMIT INTO
INTERNATIONAL WATERS
...AND WAIT.

SOUNDS
SIMPLE
ENOUGH...
EXCEPT
FOR
THESE
STUPID
ROBES.



RELAX. THIS FU MANCHU DUDE WANTS US TO
LOOK LIKE HIS SI-FAN CHARACTERS--AND
HE'S PAVIN' US PLENTY ENOUGH TO
OPERATE THIS SUB SO WE DON'T ASK
QUESTIONS.



BESIDES, IT MAKES
SENSE TO DISGUISE
OURSELVES. NO ONE
CAN SQUEAL ON
ANYONE ELSE IF
HE'S CAUGHT...

... AND
THE U.N. DELEGATES'LL
NEVER BE
ABLE TO
IDENTIFY
US.

SO HOW CAN WEARIN'
THE ROBES HURT?



"THE SUBMARINE HAS REACHED ITS DESTINATION... AND SURFACED TO FIND A WAITING FREIGHTER."



"BUT WHAT APPEARS TO BE A COMMON VESSEL..."



"IS REVEALED TO HOST A MOST UNCOMMON PASSENGER."



"YOU HAVE DONE WELL."



"AND FU MANCHU..."



"--SHALL RICHLY REWARD YOU..."



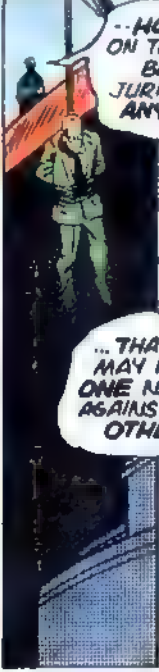
"BUT NOT UNTIL YOU HAVE HOISTED THE CAPTIVE DELEGATES ABOARD THIS FREIGHTER."



"FOR IT IS ONLY BY HOLDING BOTH AMERICAN--"



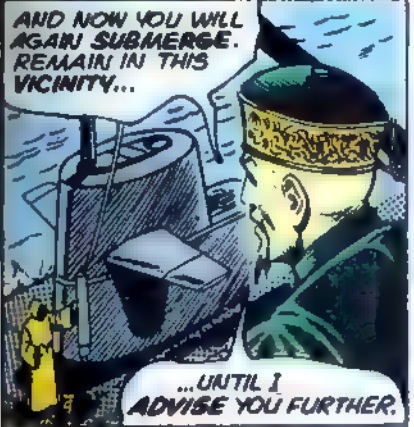
"-- AND CHINESE DELEGATES..."



"--HOSTAGE, HERE ON THIS FREIGHTER BEYOND THE JURISDICTION OF ANY NATION..."



"...THAT WE MAY PLAY ONE NATION AGAINST THE OTHER."

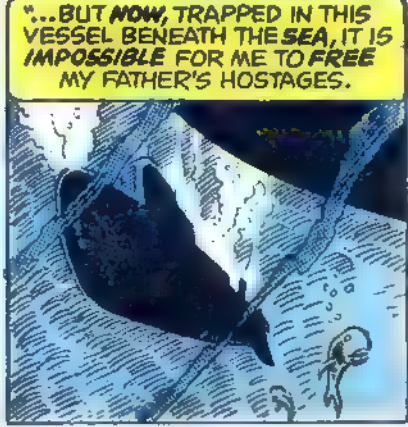


"AND NOW YOU WILL AGAIN SUBMERGE. REMAIN IN THIS VICINITY..."

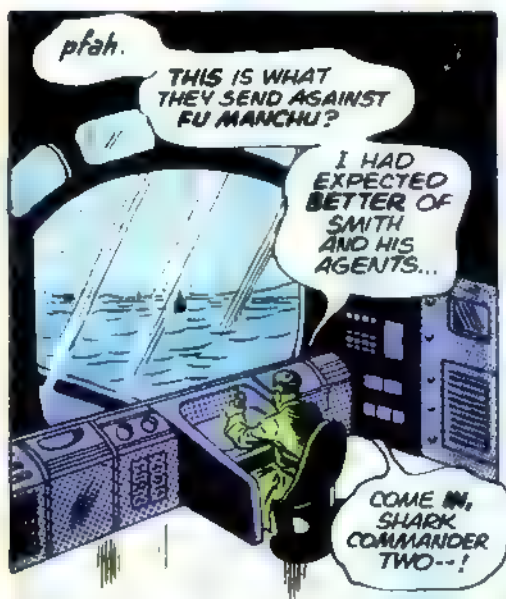
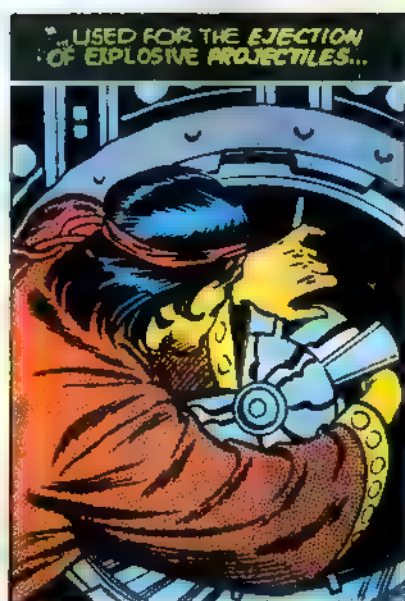
"...UNTIL I ADVISE YOU FURTHER."



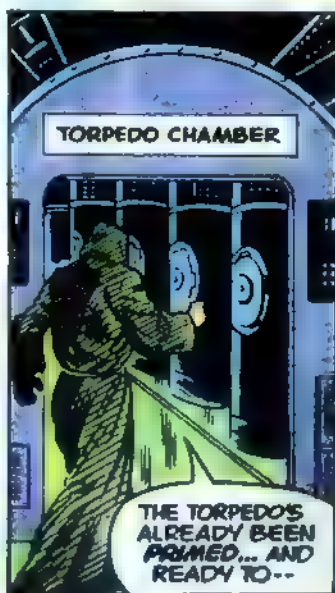
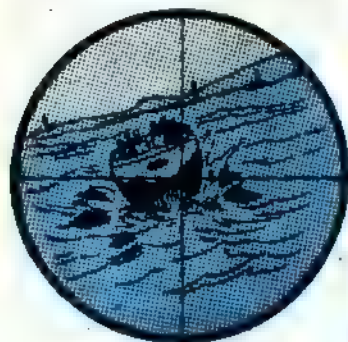
"I HAD HOPED THESE MEN WERE TO BOARD THE FREIGHTER, AND REMAIN WITH THE DELEGATES..."



"...BUT NOW, TRAPPED IN THIS VESSEL BENEATH THE SEA, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO FREE MY FATHER'S HOSTAGES."



I WISH YOU TO DESTROY IT AT ONCE.



"THEY HAVE RELEASED
THE TORPEDO."

SHOULD BE
HITTING
JUST ABOUT...

HUH--?!

THE CRUISER'S
STILL COMING!!

...NOW!

NOTHING'S
HAPPENING.

FOOLS!!

YOU'VE FORGOTTEN TO
PRIME THE TORPEDO!

NO-- IT LEFT
THE CHAMBER.
THEN IT
MUST'VE BEEN
DEFECTIVE.

BETTER LOAD
ANOTHER
ONE INTO--

SOMEBODY
DEFUSED
EVERY LAST
TORPEDO
ABOARD
SHIP--!

NO--?!!

BUT
WHO?

WHO--?!!

"I BREAK THE SURFACE
TO GREET WELCOMED AIR.
THE FREIGHTER IS NEAR..."

"I AM
FREE."

BOOM



AGAIN MY PLANS HAVE BEEN FOULED BY INTERFERENCE.

SELECT TWO DELEGATES FROM EACH NATION-- QUICKLY!



MY HELICOPTER WILL NOT ACCOMMODATE A GREATER NUMBER... NOR WILL ANY MORE THAN THESE FOUR BE NECESSARY.

THIS IS AN OUTRAGE--!



PRECISELY, MR. DELEGATE. THE AUTHORITIES IN YOUR PRECIOUS AMERICA WILL BE GREATLY OUTRAGED...



... WHEN THEY CONCLUDE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABDUCTED BY CHINESE AGENTS.

AND YOUR FELLOW DELEGATES' COMRADES IN CHINA--



--WILL BE SIMILARLY OUTRAGED...

... AND ONLY TOO EAGER TO PLACE THE BLAME ON THE IMPERIALIST AMERICANS.



AND IN THIS MANNER, I--

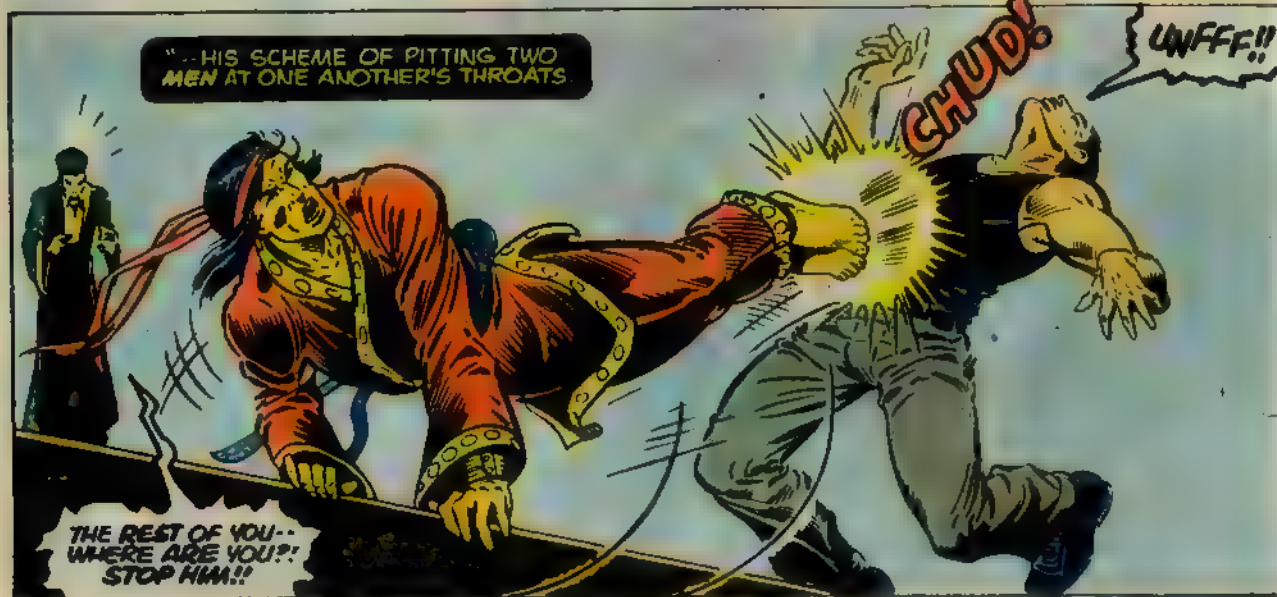
WHO--?!



SHANG-CHI--?!

STOP HIM--!!

"MY FATHER'S SCHEME OF PITTING TWO NATIONS AGAINST ONE ANOTHER IS SURPASSED IN TERMS OF EVIL ONLY BY --



... HIS SCHEME OF PITTING TWO MEN AT ONE ANOTHER'S THROATS.

THE REST OF YOU-- WHERE ARE YOU?! STOP HIM!!

CHUD!

UNFFF!!

"MY FEET STRIKE
THE FREIGHTER'S
DECK..."

"...AND I LEAP FORWARD..."

"...TO GREET MY
FATHER'S CULT
OF SI-FAN
ASSASSINS."

"AND WHEN I HAVE
DEFEATED THE
LAST ONE..."

"THERE ARE MORE."

"THE ONES FROM THE SUB-
MARINE... WITHOUT THEIR ROBES."



PREPARE TO
DIE, DOG-SON OF
FU MANCHU.



"I DO
NOT
SEE--"



"--THIS SI-FAN WHO
HAS REVIVED--"



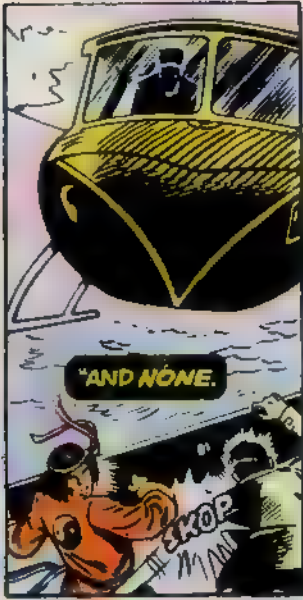
"...MOMENTARILY."



"THERE ARE BUT TWO NOW."



"ONE."



"AND NONE."



"BUT MY FATHER--"



"--HAS
ESCAPED."

SHANG-
CHI!!

"IT IS BLACK JACK TARR--
SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH'S
CHIEF AIDE-DE-CAMP.

UP TO YOUR
NECK IN MORE
TROUBLE, EH
CHINAMAN?

"AND SMITH HIMSELF.

WE GOT HERE AS FAST
AS THAT JUNKYARD CRUISER
WOULD CARRY US. THE COAST
GUARD WOULDN'T LET US
TAKE ONE OF THEIR CRAFT
OUT BEYOND THE NAUTICAL
LIMITS...

...AND AS A
RESULT, FU MANCHU
HAS ESCAPED AGAIN.

BLAST THAT
INSIDIOUS
FIEND!

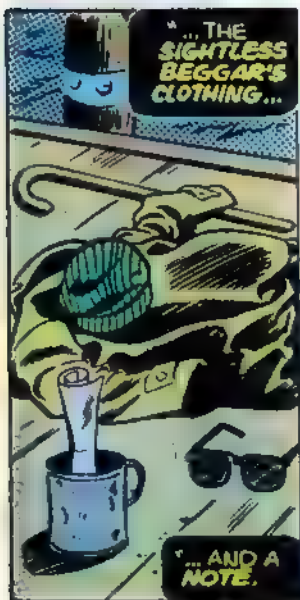
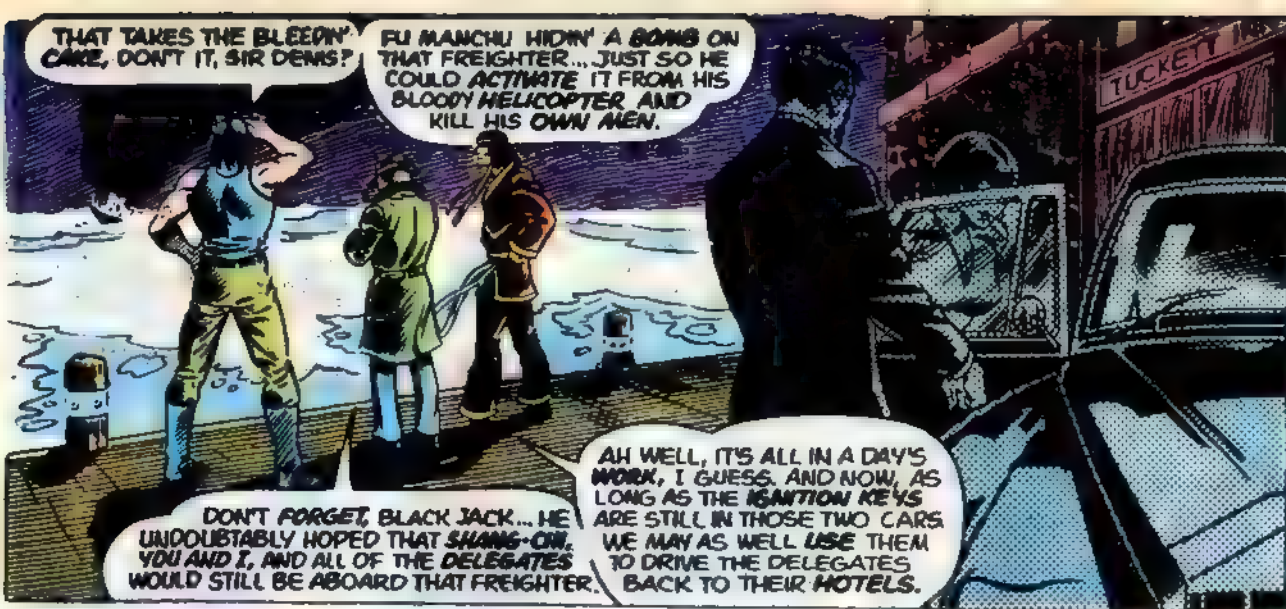
BUT AT LEAST HE
DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO
TAKE ANY OF THE
DELEGATES WITH
HIM.

AND SINCE
THEY'RE OUR FIRST
CONSIDERATION--

--WE'D BETTER
GET THEM SAFELY
ASHORE.

WE CAN COME BACK FOR THE SI-FAN
LATER. THANKS TO YOU,
SHANG-CHI, THEY'RE
UNCONSCIOUS... AND
IT'S NOT LIKELY THEY'LL
BE GOING ANYWH--

WHOOOM!



EPILOG:

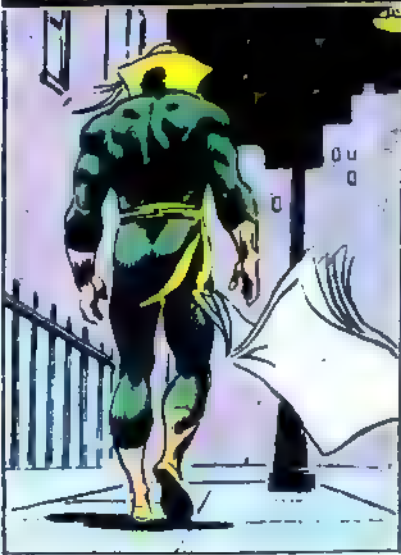
YOU ARE **IRON FIST** AND YOU SELDOM SMILE. BUT THIS EVE, YOU DO SMILE AS YOU READ A NEWSPAPER BLOWN YOUR WAY BY A CHANCE OF WIND.



IT SEEMS THERE IS SOME JUSTICE IN THE WORLD AFTER ALL.



SO YOU TURN AND PUT THOUGHTS OF YOUR RECENT DEFEAT WELL BEHIND YOU. YOU TURN AND WALK TOWARDS TOMORROW.



THE CHANCE OF WIND CARRIES THE DISCARDED PAPER DOWN THE NIGHT-SILENT STREETS OF MANHATTAN...



AND PAST THREE MEN WITH WHOM YOU HAVE UNKNOWINGLY SHARED AN ADVENTURE AND A CAUSE.



SO THAT'S IT, HUH?

IT LOOKS LIKE IT, BROTHER. WE GET OUR TAILS SPANKED BECAUSE WE "INTERFERED" WITH UN SECURITY--

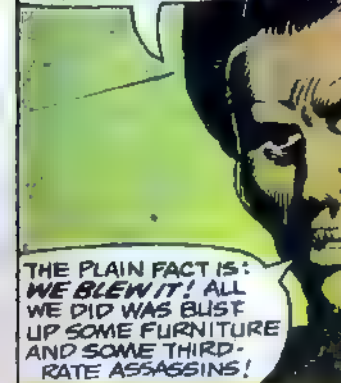


-- AND SOME **MYSTERY MEN** COME FROM LEFT FIELD TO SAVE THE DELEGATES. I WONDER WHO THOSE GUYS WERE?



DOES IT MATTER? ISN'T IT ENOUGH THAT WHEN THERE WAS A NEED, THERE WERE GOOD MEN AVAILABLE TO FILL THAT NEED?

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, LIN. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GIVE ME ANY OF THAT **PHILOSOPHY** STUFF ABOUT HOW WE PLAYED OUT OUR ASSIGNED ROLES, ARE YOU?



THE PLAIN FACT IS: **WE BLEW IT!** ALL WE DID WAS BUST UP SOME FURNITURE AND SOME THIRD-RATE ASSASSINS!

SO DON'T TRY TO CON ME WITH THAT STUFF, **CHECK?**



ACTUALLY, ALL I WAS GOING TO DO WAS SUGGEST WE GO OUT AND GET A **STEAK**.



TONY ISABELLA: SCRIPT

JOHN BUSCEMA: ART

PHIL RACHELSON: COLORS

THE CELESTIAL DESTINY OF THE MANDARIN FU MANCHU EXEMPLIFIES THE ETERNAL TRUTH OF T'AI CHI... WHOSE COMMON DEPICTION OCCURS IN THE SYMBOLS YIN AND YANG. I HAVE BEEN PERPETUALLY OPPOSED...

...FIRST, BY THE IGNORANCE OF MY COUNTRYMEN. THEN, BY SIR DENIS HAYLAND SMITH AND THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS. THEN, BY THE COMMUNISTS...

I NAMED HIM SHANG-CHI... "THE RISING AND ADVANCING OF A SPIRIT." HE WAS TO HAVE BEEN MY SWORD, TEMPERED FOR USE AGAINST MY ENEMIES...

...BUT HE CHOSE THE PATH OF PEACE.

...NOW, BY THE FLESH OF MY FLESH-- MY SON.

WITH BARELY NINETEEN YEARS, HE IS TOO YOUNG TO KNOW...

...THIS PATH DOES NOT EXIST.

HELP!

HELP ME, MISTER! MY HUSBAND'S BEING ROBBED!

I SEE YOU KNOW THE MARTIAL ARTS! THEN, QUICK--I NEED YOU!

PLEASE!

SHANG-CHI MASTER OF KUNG FU

By STEVE ENGLEHART, Author
ALAN LEE WEISS, Artist

AL MILGROM
Inks

AL
WENZEL
Colors

I HEAR
NOTHING, MISS.
PERHAPS THE
THIEVES HAVE
FLED...

... OR PERHAPS THE
MENACE OF THIS SHADOWED
CUL-DE-SAC IS OF A MORE
INTRICATE BIRTH.

TO ONE AS CONCERNED
WITH SHANG-CHI AS I, HIS
INNERMOST THOUGHTS AT
THIS MOMENT ARE LIKE THE
TRACKS OF A PHEASANT
ON THE NEW-FALLEN
SNOW.

"TWO MEN AWAIT ME-- BOTH OF GREAT SIZE."

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, MISTER? DO I LOOK LIKE THE KIND OF GIRL--



POW!



"I WONDER: DID THEY VALUE THEIR SIZE?"



"MY EARS DETECT NO THIRD ASSAILANT."

"THE WOMAN IS WIDE-EYED, HAND TO MOUTH--"



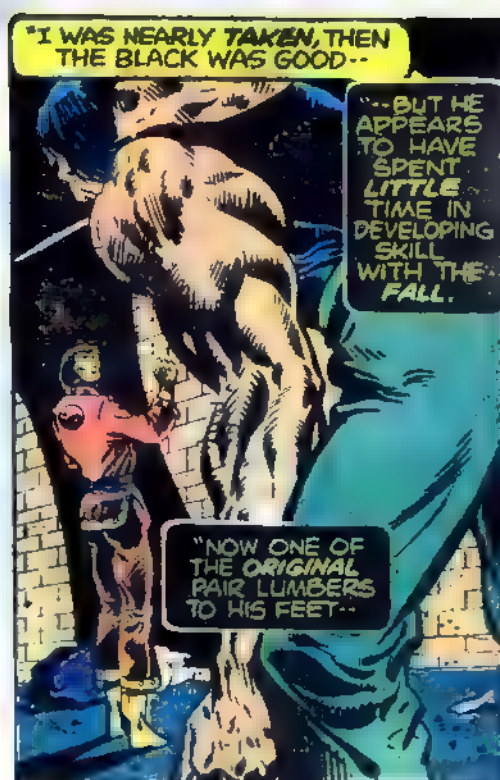
"... BUT I DO NOT REST MY BELIEF WITH HER. SHE WAS A JUDAS-GOAT-- ONE WHICH LEADS ITS FELLOWS TO THE AX! AND THE IDENTITY OF THE AX-WIELDER IS AS WELL KNOWN TO ME AS THAT OF MY FATHER, FOR THEY ARE THE SAME."



"THE SCENT OF HIS BEARD-OIL!"



"TUM!"



"I WAS NEARLY TAKEN, THEN THE BLACK WAS GOOD--"

"...BUT HE APPEARS TO HAVE SPENT LITTLE TIME IN DEVELOPING SKILL WITH THE FALL."

"NOW ONE OF THE ORIGINAL PAIR LUMBERS TO HIS FEET--"



"...AND SPEAKS."

"YOU GOT GOOD EARS, SHANG-CHI. GOOD MOVES, TOO."

"BUT I GOT POWER!"



"MY NOSE NOW TELLS ME OF ROAST DUCK AND WHISKEY."



"...AS I FREE MYSELF."

"HEY! NO--"



"...FOOMP!"

"PAM!"

"NONE OF THESE MEN
FELL WELL. IT IS AS IF
THEY WERE TRAINED
SOLELY FOR ATTACK--

YOU'RE
QUITE
SURE
OF
YOURSELF,
AREN'T
YOU, SON
OF FU
MANCHU?

"SO!

"THE WOMAN
ABANDONS
HER POSE
TO REQUIRE
SUCH
DESPERATE
MEASURES--

"--WHICH
FORGES
A VERY
BRITTLE
WEAPON.

"--I MUST BE CONSIDERED A VALUABLE PRIZE!

HAI-YA!

"I WITH-
DRAW, SHE
TENSES FOR
A SIDE-
SWEEPING
KICK.

"I LEAP.

"I LAND, REACHING FOR A NERVE
IN HER
NECK...

"EH?

"SHE JERKS AWAY, AND
REVEALS...

"--A FACE OF
FRAGMENTS
AND PAIN!

"--PAIN WHICH
I SUFFER AS
KEENLY AS SHE.

DAMN YOU!
DAMN YOU!
NEITHER YOU
NOR YOUR
FATHER
CAN LEAVE
ME IL-
LUSIONS!

MY FATHER? ARE YOU
NOT HIS AGENTS?

OF COURSE NOT!
WE ATTACKED
YOU, REMEMBER?

YOU
CONTEND
AGAINST
FU
MANCHU?

YES!
TO THE
DEATH!

HERE IS YOUR HAT. I SHALL GO WITH YOU.

"THE THERE MEN SOON **REVIVE**
UNDER MY MINISTRATIONS, AND
WE WALK **BACK** THROUGH NEW
YORK'S "**CHINATOWN**"...

"...BUT THEIR **EYES**
QUEST EVERYWHERE,
AS THOUGH **THEY** ARE
NOW TRAPPED..."

"...AND WHENEVER
THEY PEER AT ME,
THE MEN YET SEE
MY FATHER."

"STILL, THEY SAY NOTHING, UNTIL WE REACH
CANAL STREET. AND THEN ONLY..."

A SPY DIES THE
LEAST ENDURABLE
OF DEATHS,
SHANG-CHI

KUNG FU-KA
AIKIDO · TAI CHI · JUDO
WINGED DRAGONS
SHANGHAI TIGER PATRIOTS

HE WILL NOT
BETRAY US,
TSAA! I
TRUST HIM!

I SHALL NOT BETRAY YOU.

"ONCE PAST THE ANCIENT, SOOT-STAINED DOORS,
I FIND A MODERN... "**KARATE SCHOOL**," THE
AMERICANS CALL IT."

"THIS SUDDEN
FAD OF FOREIGN
VIOLENCE, WITH
LITTLE REGARD
FOR FOREIGN
PHILOSOPHY,
SADDENS ME..."

"...BUT IT IS NOT WHAT THESE PEOPLE
HAVE BROUGHT ME HERE TO SEE."

IN HERE.

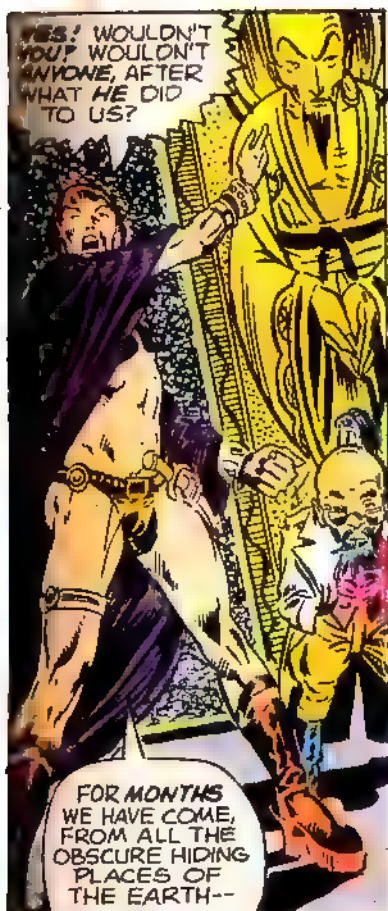
AND I ENTER A ROOM... A ROOM UNLIKE ANY OTHER I HAVE EVER ENTERED.



"I DO SO, EXPLAINING ONCE MORE THAT I AM OPPOSED TO MY FATHER.

IN OTHER WORDS, HE TRIED TO MOLD YOU LIKE HE TRIED TO MOLD US--





YES! WOULDN'T YOU WOULDN'T ANYONE, AFTER WHAT HE DID TO US?

FOR MONTHS WE HAVE COME, FROM ALL THE OBSCURE HIDING PLACES OF THE EARTH--



--AND SOON NOW--VERY, VERY SOON NOW--WE SHALL HAVE OUR REVENGE!

EVERYTHING IS IN READINESS, O CELESTIAL ONE.

EXCELLENT, DUCHARME.

AWAIT THEN, MY COMMAND.



WE WANT-ED YOU AS A LURE FOR YOUR FATHER--

--BUT NOW, I THINK, YOU MAY WELL JOIN US!

WILL YOU OR WON'T YOU, SHANG?



REVENGE, LIKE OIL ON THE WATER, THIS THING APPEARS VIVID AND EXCITING.

BUT THE WATER DOES NOT MIX WITH THE OIL, PREFERING TO CONTINUE ITS FLOW... AND SOON, THE OIL IS FAR BEHIND AND MEANINGLESS.

BUT I SHALL NOT BETRAY YOU.



I'M AFRAID, MY DEAR MAN, THAT THAT IS NOT THE ANSWER I WAS LOOKING FOR. YOU KNOW OF US NOW, AND THUS--

--YOU OBLIGE US TO KILL YOU!

"THE WILLFULNESS OF HIS WORDS STRIKES ME AS WOULD A FIST! IN NO MANNER IS HE OBLIGED TO KILL ME!"

"I HAVE SAID ON TWO OCCASIONS (ALTHOUGH ONLY ONCE WITHIN HIS HEARING)."

"THAT I WILL SAFE-
GUARD THEIR CAUSE.
TRUST AMONG HONOR-
ABLE MEN WOULD
SAVING US CONTENTION."



"YET, WE SHALL
CONTEND. A
PITY, I FEEL
KINSHIP
TO THESE PEOPLE"



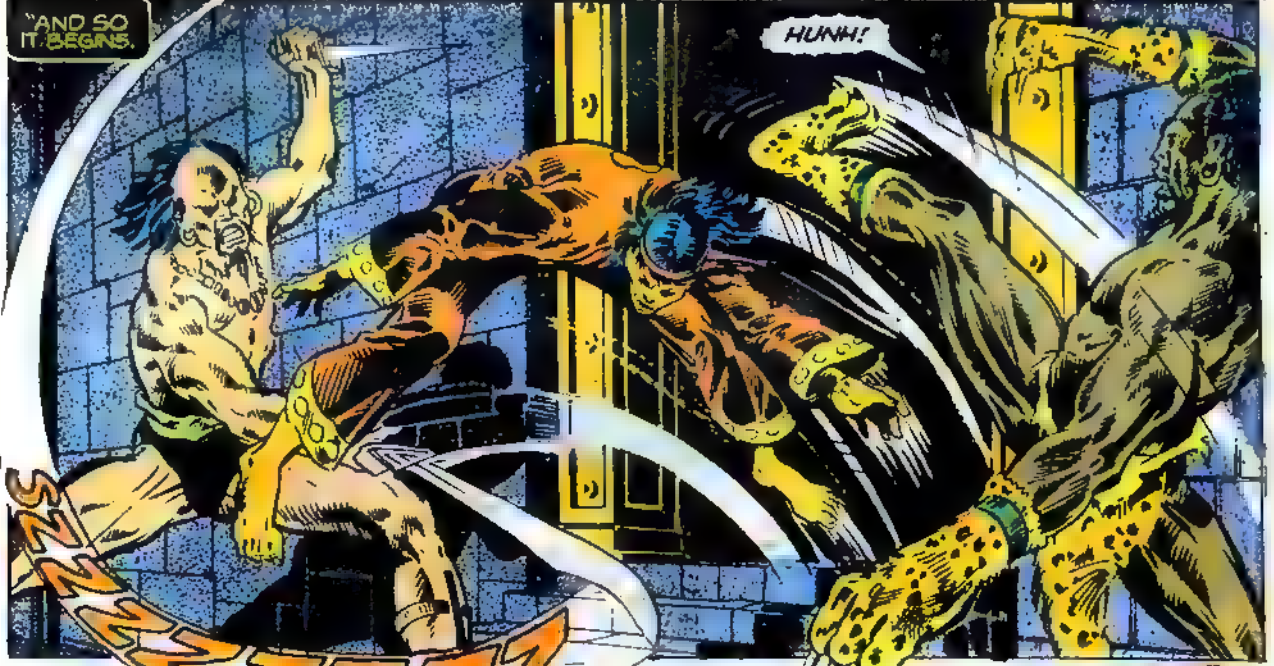
"THEY, TOO,
HAD SO MANY
FRAGILE
POSSIBILITIES
DESTROYED BY
MY FATHER'S
EXPLOITATION."

"BUT I MUST TURN
AND FACE *THESE*
THREE MEN NOW."



"THEY ARE
PREPARED
TO ATTACK."

AND SO
IT BEGINS.



"THE MAN RELIES TOO MUCH UPON HIS SWORD."

"THERE IS ONLY ONE WEAPON A HUMAN ALWAYS HAS--"

"--AND THAT IS HIS OR HER OWN BODY."

"TRAINED PROPERLY--"

POG!

"--IT IS THE ONLY WEAPON NEEDED."

"BUT, HOW SAD--"

"-- THAT IT IS NEEDED."

"I KNOW SO LITTLE OF THE WORLD--"

"I GIVE THANKS THAT AMONG THE OTHER TREASURES OF MY SMALL KNOWLEDGE--"

"--YET, THAT LESSON IS TAUGHT ME OVER AND OVER AGAIN."

"--I HAVE LEARNED TO SHUN THE WAYS OF VIOLENCE--"

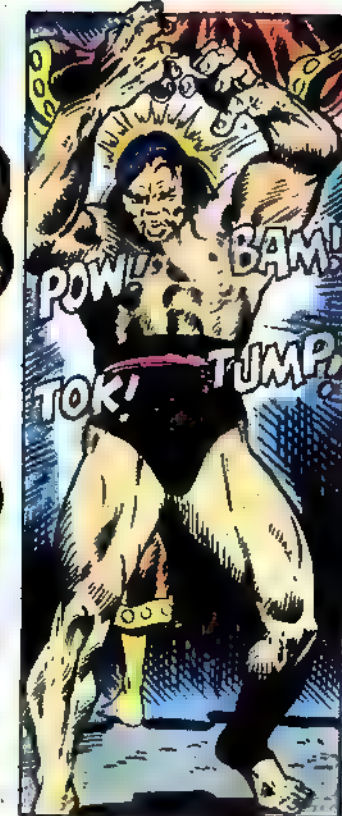
...AND USE NO MORE THAN NECESSARY FORCE.



ALIEE!



I TAKE YOUR FOUL CARCASS AND--



"THE MOVEMENTS OF MY OWN BODY BECOME NEARLY A BLUR. FROM ALL SIDES, BEINGS OF EVERY SHAPE AND SIZE CLAMBER TOWARD ME, THEIR ONLY SIMILARITIES: A VESTIGE OF HUMAN APPEARANCE-- AND AN INHUMAN HATRED FOR ME.

"I FLOW TOWARD THEM AND THROUGH THEM--

"--STRIKING AND STRIKING AND STRIKING!

HAI-YA!

CLUD!

STOK!

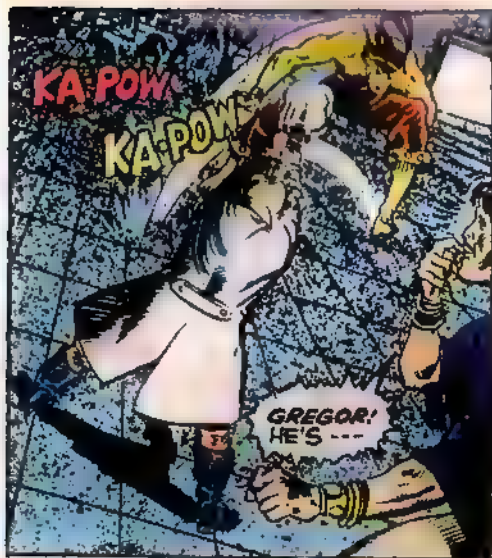
BUNK!

WAM!

SAVE ME, GREGOR!

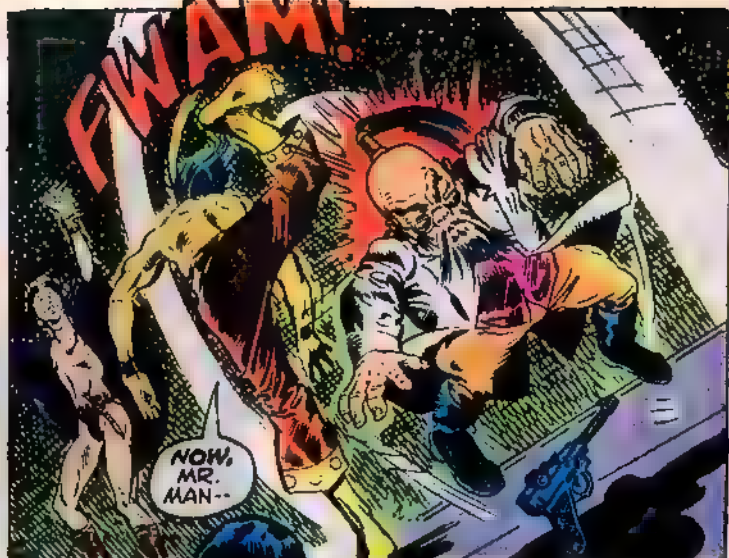
DON'T LET HIM TOUCH ME!

HE SHALL NOT PASS, LEADER.



KA POW
KA POW

GREGOR!
HE'S ---



FWAM!

NOW,
MR.
MAN--



--NOW, I CAN
TAKE YOUR LIFE
WITH ONE SWIFT
BLOW--IN ANY
ONE OF MANY
MANNERS!

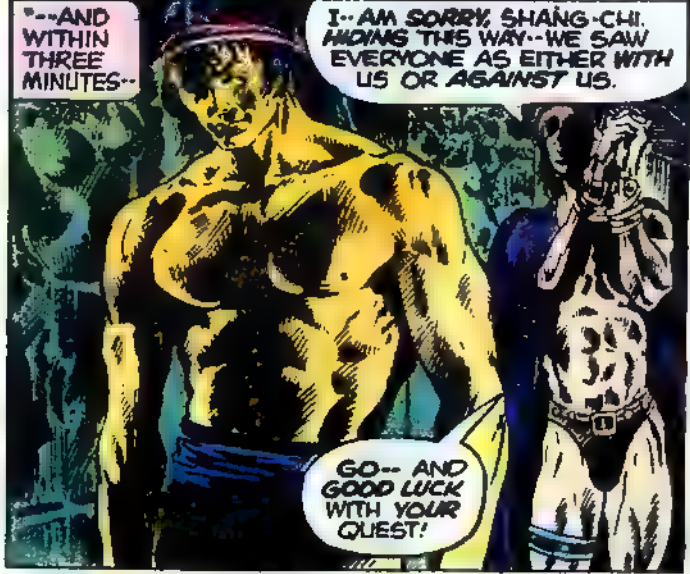


BUT TO DO
SO WOULD
BE THE ACT
OF A
MADMAN...
AND I AM
NOT MAD.

I
PREFER
TO TAKE
YOUR
TRUST.

"THE TEMPLE
GROWS STILL..."

"--AND WITHIN THREE MINUTES--"



I--AM SORRY, SHANG-CHI. HIDING THIS WAY--WE SAW EVERYONE AS EITHER WITH US OR AGAINST US.

GO-- AND GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR QUEST!

I HAVE BELIEVED IN YOU SINCE YOU GAVE ME MY MAT, SHANG-CHI.



THIS TIME, I GIVE YOU YOUR JACKET--AND A PLEA THAT WE MEET AGAIN SOME DAY.

*AHH. EARLIER, I CON-TENDED FOR MY FREEDOM--



*--YET NOW, THE LEAVING OF THESE PEOPLE HAS BECOME EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.



NOW.



KA-ROO-KA



"THAT--COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY--"



"--MY FATHER!



"TO DESTROY HIS FOES--"

"--HE WAITED-- UNTIL I WAS CLEAR--"



"--TO FLAUNT HIS POWER BEFORE ME--TO TAUNT ME!"



MY SON WILL HAVE MUCH TO CONTEMPLATE THIS EVE!

THE PIPE, DUCHARME!

BALMY SPRING WINDS CARRY A SCENT OF MOISTURE FROM THE WATERS OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY, TOUCHING HERE AND THERE AMONG THE SEVEN HILLS OF THIS CITY...

...TOUCHING THE STREETS AND WALKS OF CHINATOWN...

...TOUCHING ONE PARTICULAR YOUTH, RETURNING HOME FROM AN EVENING'S SPORT, CARRYING A TROPHY THAT BEARS WITNESS TO HIS PROWESS...

...A PROWESS HE'LL SOON HAVE TO PROVE!

SWISH!

NINJAS!

PRESENTING:
THE SENSE-
STUNNING
ORIGIN SAGA OF
THE FIGHTING
TEAM CALLED--

THE SONS OF THE TIGER!

ASSASSINS!
THIS IS THE
SECOND NIGHT
YOU'VE ATTACKED
ME OUTSIDE
MY SCHOOL...

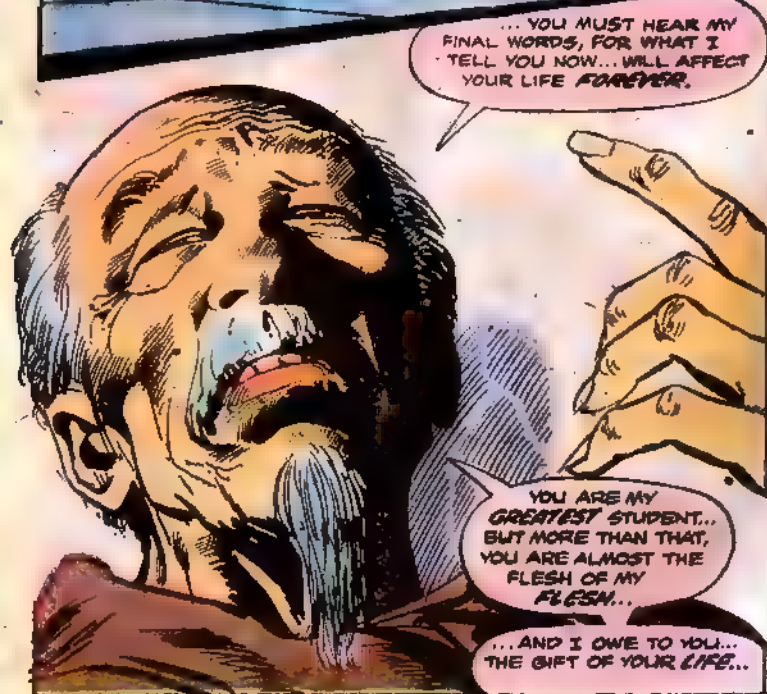
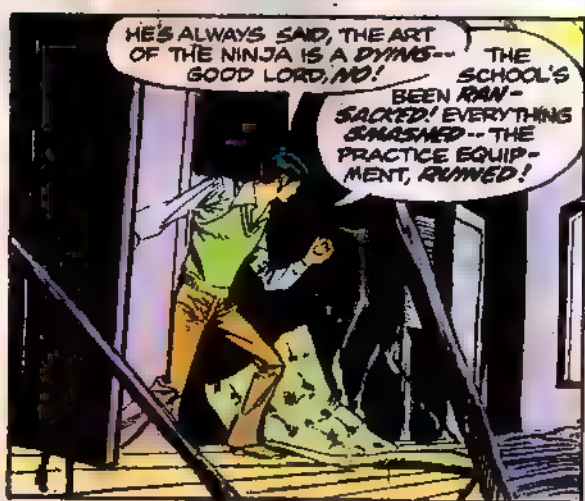
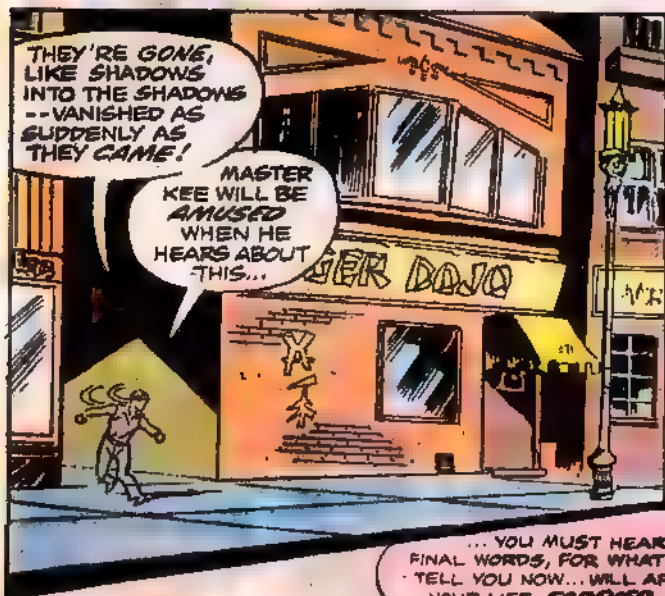
THIS NIGHT
WILL BE THE
LAST!

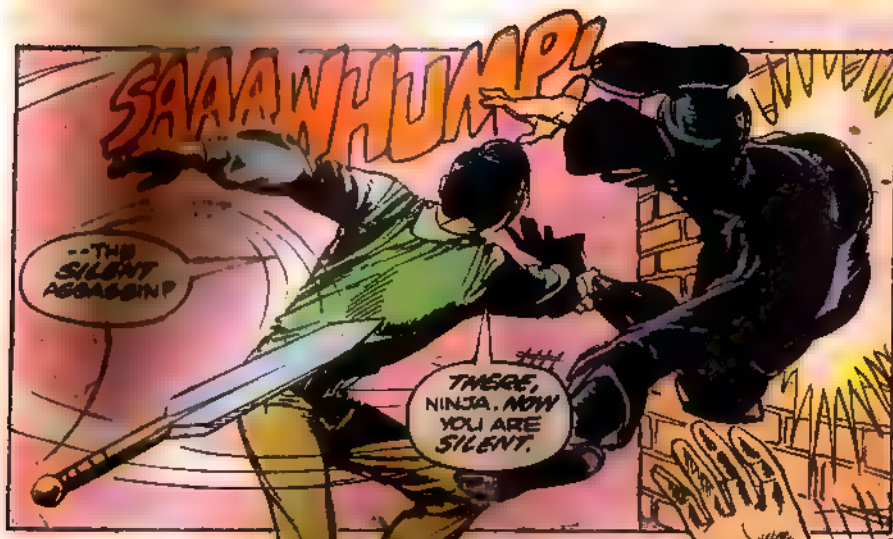
KRAK!

KRUNCH!

GERRY CONWAY * AUTHOR
DICK GIORDANO * ARTIST
MICHELE WOLFMAN * COLORS

ROY THOMAS * EDITOR & ADVISOR





--THE SILENT ASSASSIN

THERE, NINJA. NOW YOU ARE SILENT.



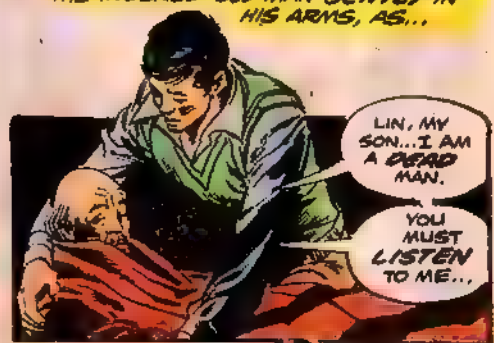
AS FOR THE REST OF YOU, ATTACK ALONE OR TOGETHER. IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO--

EH?



BUT--WHERE'S MASTER KEE? WHY ISN'T HE--?

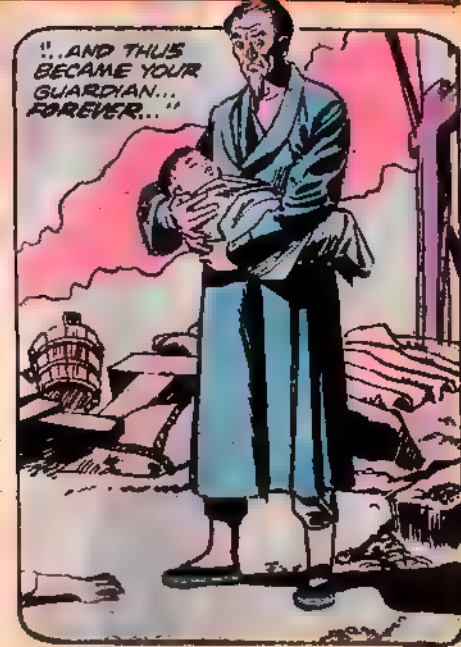
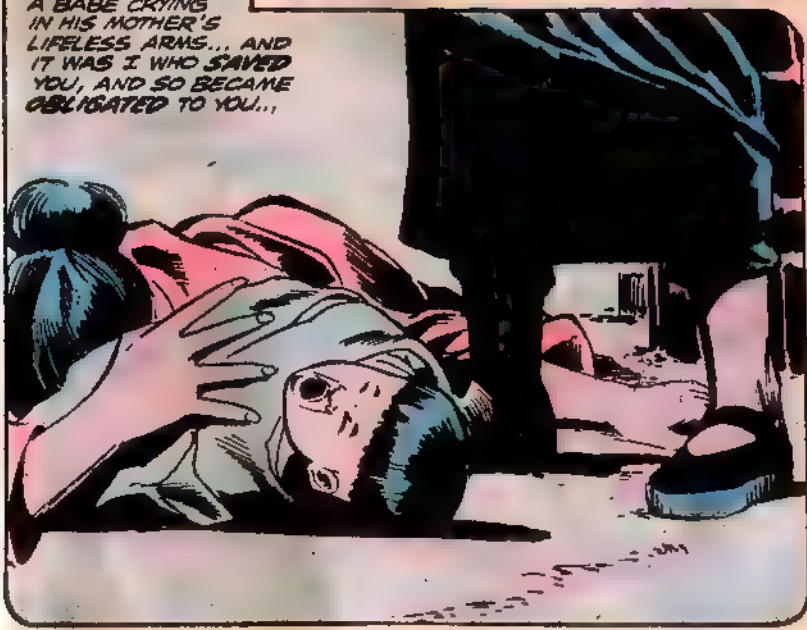
FOR A MOMENT THE YOUTH STANDS MOTIONLESS, HIS MIND STUNNED; THEN, HE MOVES FORWARD, LIFTING THE INJURED OLD MAN GENTLY IN HIS ARMS, AS...



LIN, MY SON... I AM A DEAD MAN.

YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME...

"...IT WAS I WHO FOUND YOU, A BABE CRYING IN HIS MOTHER'S LIFELESS ARMS... AND IT WAS I WHO SAVED YOU, AND SO BECAME OBLIGATED TO YOU..."



"...AND THUS BECAME YOUR GUARDIAN... FOREVER..."

MASTER KEE,
I KNOW THIS...
THERE IS NO
NEED TO...

BUT THERE
IS, LIN...

"...MORE NEED THAN
YOU KNOW. I HAVE
ONE LAST GIFT FOR
YOU, BUT TO UNDER-
STAND IT, YOU MUST
REMEMBER, YOU
MUST LET YOUR
THOUGHTS GO
BACK...

"YOU REMEMBER HOW
WE CAME TO AMERICA,
MY SON... AND HOW I
TAUGHT YOU THE
ARTS OF THE
ANCIENTS...

"YOU LEARNED WELL,
LIN SUN... YOU WERE
QUICK, BRIGHT... THE
BEST OF THE PUPILS
I TOOK IN...

"ONLY TWO OTHERS
RIVAL YOUR TALENTS,
AND THEY ARE NEITHER
OF THEM OF OUR RACE...
YOU KNOW THEM, LIN
SUN, THEY ARE YOUR
FRIENDS... YOUR
ONLY FRIENDS...

"ABE BROWN IS ONE,
A FIERCE YOUNG MAN
FROM THIS CITY'S
OTHER GHETTO...

"ROBERT DIAMOND
IS THE SECOND,
THE YOUNG ACTOR
WHO CAME TO
'PICK UP A FEW
TRICKS' BECAUSE
THE MARTIAL
ARTS WERE
BECOMING
POPULAR IN
THE AMERICAN
CINEMA...

"...AND WHO STAYED
AS HE LEARNED TO
RESPECT KUNG FU...
AND ALSO RESPECT
HIMSELF."

YEA, MASTER KEE, THEY ARE MY FRIENDS... BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW...

YOUTH UNDERSTANDS LITTLE, BUT KNOWS MUCH, MY SON.

THERE ARE... FORCES IN THIS WORLD, WHICH WOULD DESTROY US ALL...

...AND ONLY YOU... AND YOUR TWO FRIENDS... MAY FIND THE POWER TO STOP THAT DESTRUCTION.

THERE, LIN SUN... ON THAT STAND...

THERE LIES THE ANSWER... TO YOUR QUESTIONS...

...THERE LIES THE SECRET... OF YOUR... DESTINY...

MASTER KEE!
NOOOOOOO!

SEVERAL SECONDS PASS, AND FOR A TIME THE ONLY SOUND HEARD IN THE GUTTED SCHOOL IS A LOW SOBBING... WHICH ENDS FINALLY, AS THE YOUNG LIN SUN RISES TO HIS FEET, CROSSES THE RUBBLE-STREWN ROOM, AND...

IS THIS MASTER KEE'S LAST GIFT? A JADE TIGER HEAD, THE SYMBOL OF OUR SCHOOL...?

WAIT... THERE'S AN INSCRIPTION...

"WHEN THREE ARE CALLED, AND STAND AS ONE, AS ONE THEY'LL FIGHT, THERE WILL BE DONE... FOR EACH IS BORN ANEW, THE TIGER'S SON."

"THE TIGER'S SON"... THE SONS OF MASTER KEE.

I THINK I UNDERSTAND, MASTER... AND I PRAY WE'LL BE WORTHY.

FOR THIS I PROMISE, ONE DAY YOUR DEATH WILL BE AVENGED-- BY YOUR "SON"...

--THE SONS OF THE TIGER!

TWENTY MINUTES
LATER, IN SAN
FRANCISCO'S
"OTHER GHETTO..."

SPAK!

BROTHER, YOU'RE
ONE LUCKY DUDE...

YOU JUST GOT YOUR-
SELF A TASTE OF
AUTHENTIC KUNG FU...
WHAT YOU CALL YOUR
DRAGON STAMP!

HOPE YOU LIKED
IT "BROTHER"...
THERE'S PLENTY
MORE WHERE
THAT CAME
FROM!

DON'T JUST
STAND THERE--
KILL HIM!

YOU HEARD THE MAN, DOG-FACE...
KILL ME... IF YOU CAN GET NEAR
ENOUGH TO TRY.

SHOOT, YOU
GUYS MAKE
ME SICK.

KRACK!

THE BIGGEST
DRUG HUSTLERS
ON THE NORTH
SIDE--

--AND YOU FIGHT LIKE
A BUNCH OF GIRLS!

THUMP!

I MEAN, IF YOU WANT
ME DEAD, YOU HAVE TO
MAKE ME DEAD--

DON'T EXPECT ME TO BEND
OVER AND LET YOU DO IT,
THOUGH--

--'CAUSE BROTHERS,
THAT AIN'T OLD ABE'S
WAY!

SPASH!

BUT, IT QUICKLY BECOMES APPARENT THE WOULD-BE KILLERS HAVE NO STOMACH FOR FIGHTING A VICTIM WHO STRIKES BACK, AND SO...

WHEE-OH. BROTHER ABE! YOU SURE HANDLED THEM.

GUESS THEY WON'T BE BOTHERIN' THIS STREET ANY MORE, WILL THEY?

NOT IF I CAN HELP IT...

HAI...
HUH?

LIN! ARE YOU TRYIN' TO GET YOURSELF KILLED, SNEAKIN' UP ON FOLKS LIKE THAT?

DEAD? ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

IT'S TRUE. LAST NIGHT SOMEONE ATTACKED ME OUTSIDE THE DOJO... IT MUST HAVE BEEN A TEST, TO SEE HOW MUCH TROUBLE I'D BE.

TONIGHT, WHILE I WAS AWAY, FOUR NINJAS RANSACKED THE SCHOOL... AND KILLED MASTER KEE!

THAT'S LOUSY, MAN... BUT WHAT CAN I DO?

I WAS HOPING YOU'D HELP ME ABE. I WANT REVENGE.

THE WAY I SEE IT, SOMEBODY HAS TO STAND UP TO THESE CREEPS... AN' SINCE I'VE GOT THE KNOW-HOW... WELL, IT MIGHT AS WELL BE ME.

WAIT'LL THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS HEAR ABOUT THIS.

THOSE PUSHERS TRIED TO PUT A SCENE ON YOU--

AND YOU PUSHED THEM RIGHT BACK!

SEE Y'ROUND, ABE.

TAKE IT EASY, TAKI.

SOMEONE BEHIND ME...!

WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' UP HERE, ANYWAY? DIDN'T YOU HAVE A TOURNAMENT TONIGHT?

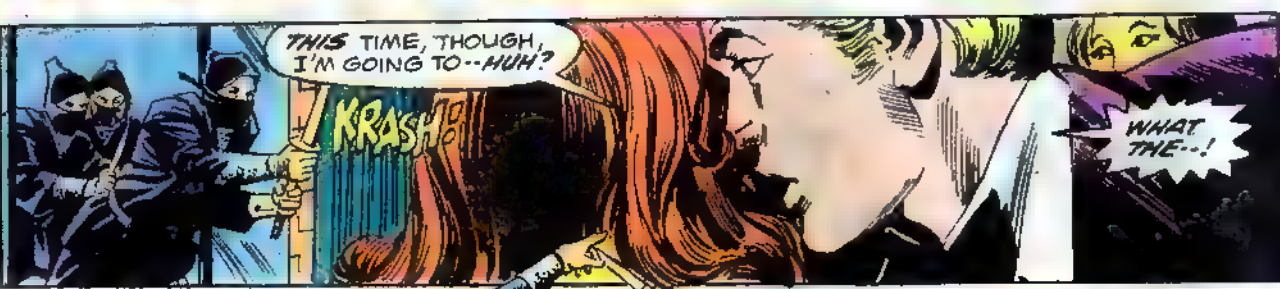
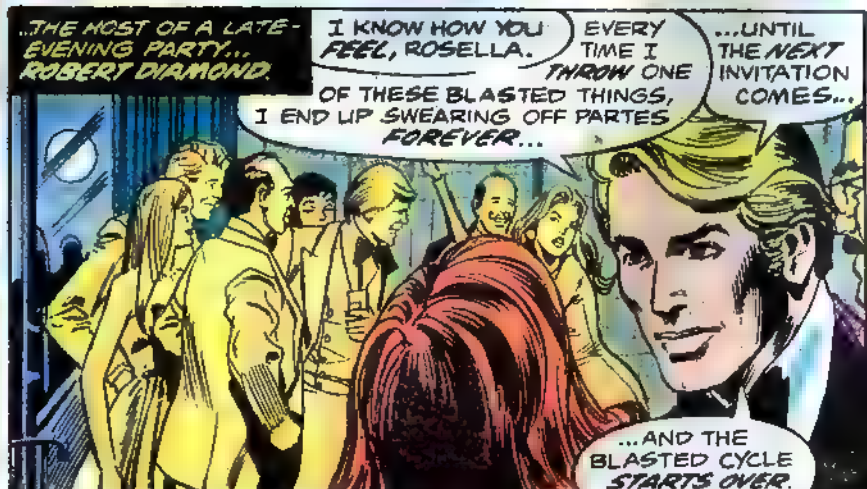
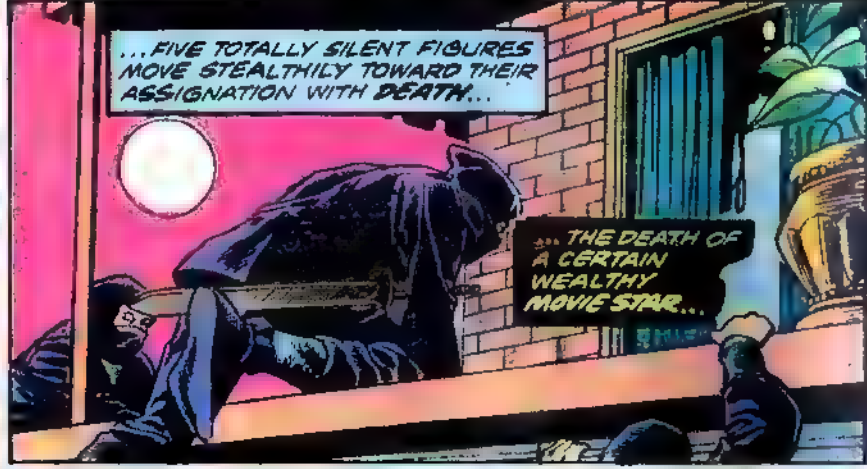
THAT PART OF MY LIFE IS OVER, ABE. SOMETHING HAPPENED.

IT'S MASTER KEE... HE'S DEAD.

MAN ENOUGH? MISTER, I'VE GOT MY OWN PROBLEMS-- MY OWN RESPONSIBILITIES.

BUT IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER, I'LL COME WITH YOU-- JUST THIS ONCE. AFTER ALL, I OWE THE MASTER SOMETHING...

BUT IF YOU'RE NOT MAN ENOUGH...





HYAH!

LOOKS LIKE ALL THE TRAINING I RECEIVED WAS WORTH SOMETHING AFTER ALL!

IT MAY NOT HAVE GOTTEN ME ANY NEW ROLES-- BUT IT JUST MAY SAVE MY LIFE!

JUST THEN...

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE THE ONE THE NINJAS ATTACKED, LIN!

SO I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE THEY WANT DEAD.

LET'S NOT WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW, THOUGH.

BOB'S LUCKY WE DECIDED TO COME HERE RIGHT AWAY--

-- HE'S GONNA NEED ALL THE HELP HE CAN GET!

WATCH OUT, YOU SLIMEY SONS OF CRUD! AS OF NOW--

-- WE'RE COMIN' THROUGH!

WE HAVE THEM ON THE RUN, ABE. APPARENTLY, THESE NINJAS DON'T LIVE UP TO THE STANDARDS OF THEIR ANCESTORS...

...AND FRANKLY...

SWAK!

...THAT'S JUST...

...TOO BAD!

AND IN THE END, AT LEAST, THE NINJAS FULFILL THE MYTH:

FOR THEY ARE SILENT...

AND DIE WITHOUT A SCREAM.

Y-YOU KILLED THEM, LIN...

AS THEY KILLED MASTER KEE.

NOW, FOR THE OTHERS...

THEY'RE GONE... AND SO ARE MY GUESTS.

QUICKLY, HIS VOICE ALMOST CHOKED WITH EMOTION, LIN EXPLAINS THE EVENING'S EVENTS... AS BOB DIAMOND LISTENS WITH GROWING WONDER...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND... WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO ELIMINATE MASTER KEE?

YOU ARE NOT A CHINESE, BOB... YOU DON'T LIVE IN OUR WORLD, DON'T HEAR THE RUMORS WE HEAR...

THERE ARE LEGENDS...

...TALES OF AN ANCIENT CONSPIRACY AGAINST MANKIND.

IT'S POSSIBLE THE MEMBERS OF THIS CONSPIRACY SAW MASTER KEE AS A THREAT, AND SO DISPOSED OF HIM...

...JUST AS THEY TRIED TO DISPOSE OF US... BECAUSE OF THIS.

HEY, MAN--YOU DON'T THINK THOSE PUSHERS WHO ATTACKED ME--?

THEY MAY HAVE BEEN PART OF IT, ABE-- AND THERE NO DOUBT THE NINJAS WE FOUGHT HERE ARE ALSO INVOLVED--

ONE HOUR LATER,
IN A SCHOOL LOCATED
IN ONE OF CHINA-
TOWN'S LESS
DESIRABLE
DISTRICTS...

PIG!
HE

BUNT!

...FOR SUI TI KAMA
WILL NOT ACCEPT
FAILURE, EITHER IN
HIMSELF... OR THOSE
WHO SERVE HIM!

THE SEVEN SILENT
ONES WILL BE MOST
DISPLEASED BY THIS
NIGHT'S WORK: FOUR
TIMES HAVE WE ATTACK-
ED, AND THREE TIMES
HAVE WE FAILED.

WHAT
WILL IT
MATTER
TO THEM
THAT YOU
ARE BUT
NOVICES?

THEY EXPECT--
THEY DEMAND
SUCCESS--

I TOLD YOU TO
KILL THE CAUCA-
SION... AND
YOU'VE FAILED.

THAT FAILURE
WILL COST YOU
YOUR LIFE...



...AND YOU
HAVE BROUGHT
THEM FAILURE.

NOT COMPLETELY,
MASTER OF
ASSASSINS.

THEY DID SUCCEED
IN KILLING AN
AILING OLD MAN...

...AND FOR THAT
THEY... AND YOU...
WILL DIE...

...AT THE
CLAWS OF THE
TIGER!

SPIRIT OF MY
FATHER! WE
ARE ATTACKED--
BY MADMEN--!



-- PART OF THE PLOT TO TAKE AWAY-- THIS.

THE JADE NECKLACE THE MASTER GAVE YOU?

WHAT GOOD IS THAT HUNK OF JUNK TO US, LIN?

IT COULD MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. DEFEAT...OR VICTORY.

EACH OF YOU...TAKE ONE OF THE CLAWS.

MASTER KEE GAVE US THESE TALISMANS FOR A REASON.

WITH THEM, THE THREE OF US CAN FIGHT AS ONE...AND GET REVENGE ON THE KILLERS OF MASTER KEE.



REVENGE? THAT'S TOO HEAVY FOR ME, MAN.

ABE'S RIGHT... WE'RE NOT ASSASSINS.



COUNT ME OUT, LIN.

I'M SORRY... BUT I CAN'T GO ALL THE WAY.

FINE.



I'LL GO ALONE.

ONE MOMENT.

TWO.

THE MEN EXCHANGE GLANCES; THEIR EYES LOWER.

FINALLY, ONE MAN DRAWS HIMSELF UP, CLEARS HIS THROAT, AND SAYS...

WAIT, LIN. WE'RE COMING WITH YOU.



YOU LEFT A
TRAIL,
ASSASSIN.

WE KNEW
THE MEN
YOU SENT
AGAINST US,
COULDN'T BE
FULL NINJAS--

--AND THERE
WAS ONLY ONE
NINJA SCHOOL
IN SAN FRAN-
CISCO--
YOURS!

THEN YOU ARE
NOT ONLY
MAD--

YOU ARE
FOOLS,
AS WELL!

YOU'RE THE
FOOL, MISTER--
IF YOU THOUGHT
WE WOULDN'T
SEEK REVENGE!

PUNCH!

KRUMP!

I EXPECTED IT... NO,
I PRAYED FOR IT!

FOR YOU HAVE
GIVEN YOURSELF
TO ME... TO
DIE!

THOUGH STUNNED, THEY
RECOVER QUICKLY; BUT
INSTEAD OF TURNING TO
THE ATTACK ONCE MORE--

--THEY TURN INSTEAD
TO THE AMULET EACH
CARRIES ABOUT HIS
NECK--

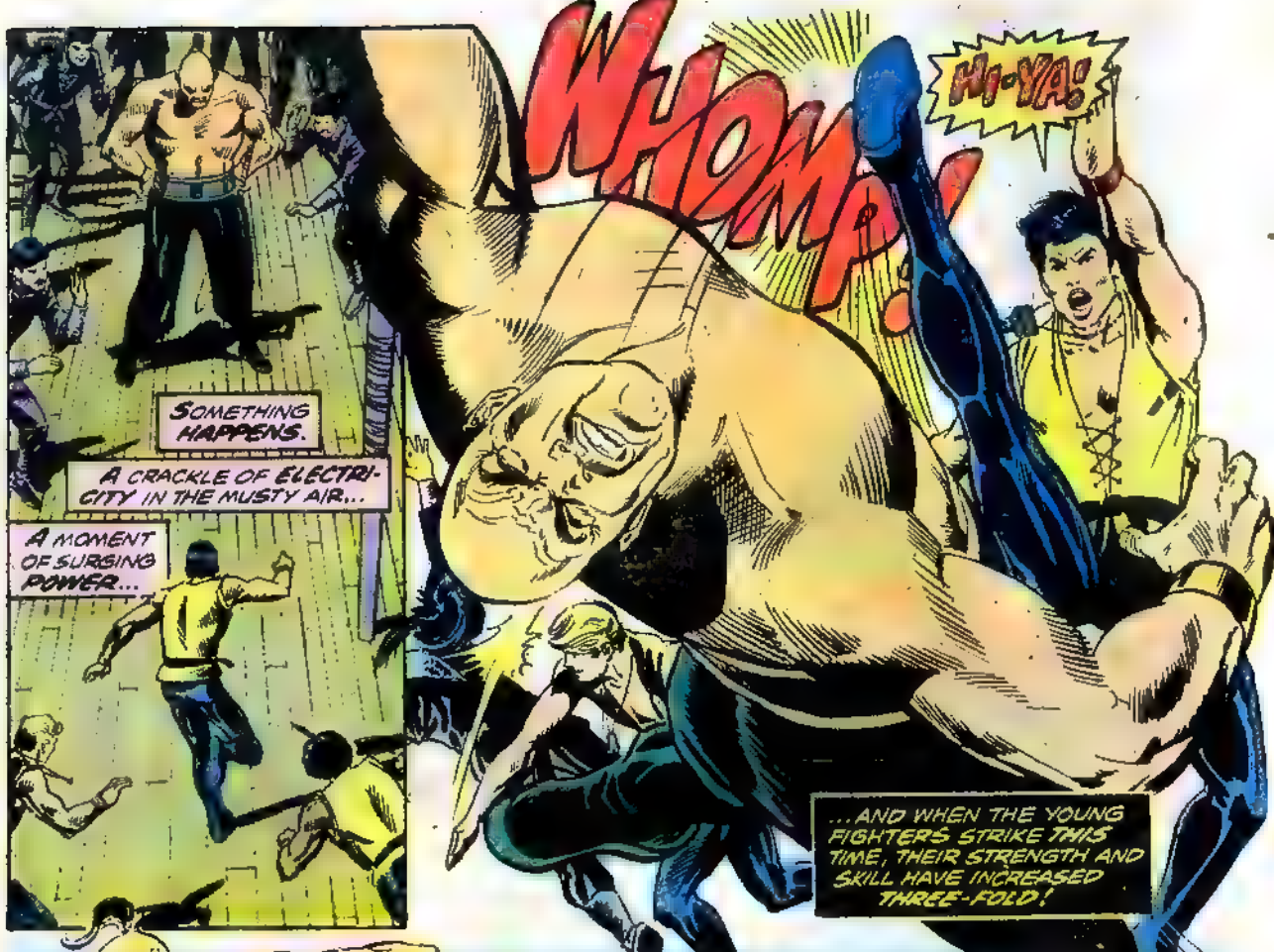
--AND THEY JOIN
HANDS, AND TOGETHER,
BEGIN AN EERIE
CHANT-- THE CHANT
OF THE TIGER:

"WHEN THREE
ARE CALLED,
AND STAND
AS ONE..."

"...AS ONE
THEY'LL FIGHT,
THEIR WILL
BE DONE..."

"FOR EACH
IS BORN ANEW.
THE TIGER'S
SON!"



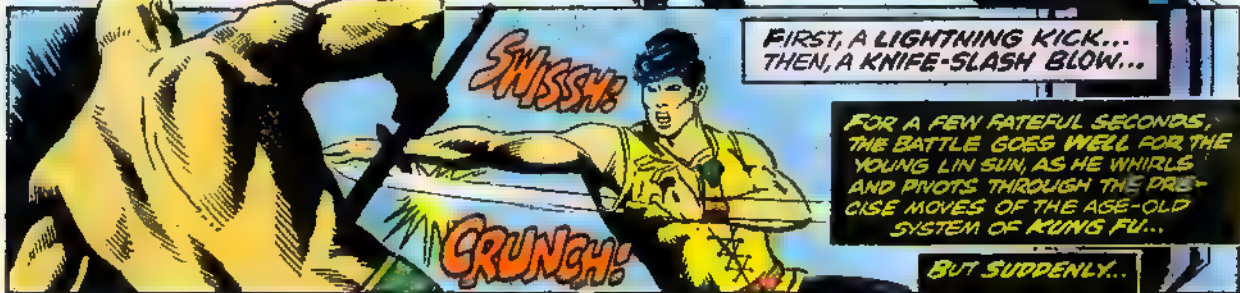


SOMETHING HAPPENS.

A CRACKLE OF ELECTRICITY IN THE MUSTY AIR...

A MOMENT OF SURGING POWER...

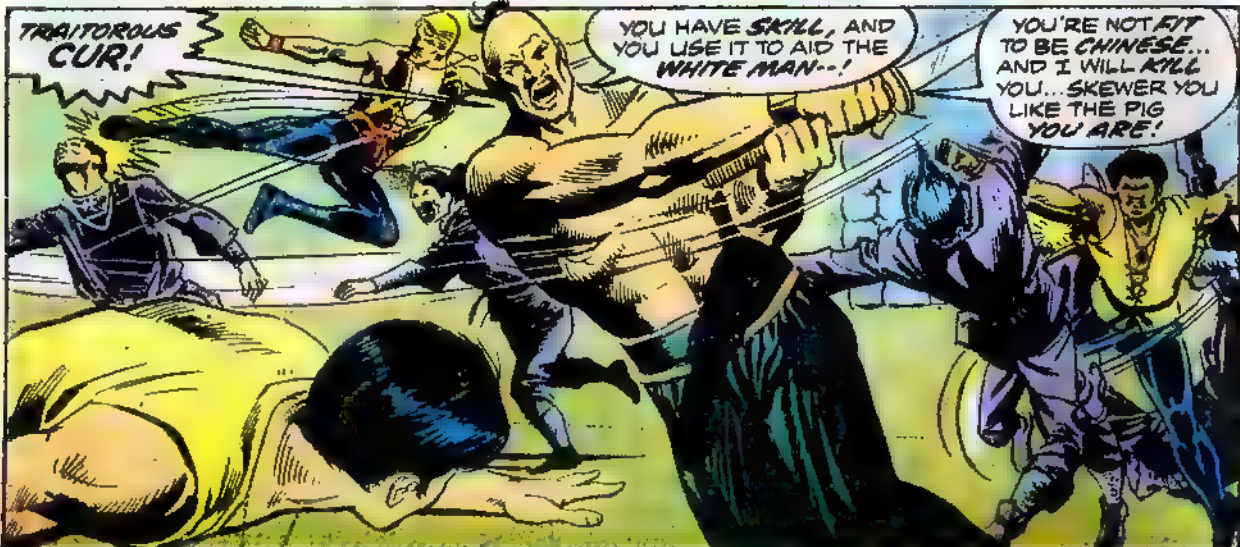
...AND WHEN THE YOUNG FIGHTERS STRIKE THIS TIME, THEIR STRENGTH AND SKILL HAVE INCREASED THREE-FOLD!



FIRST, A LIGHTNING KICK... THEN, A KNIFE-SLASH BLOW...

FOR A FEW FATEFUL SECONDS, THE BATTLE GOES WELL FOR THE YOUNG LIN SUN, AS HE WHIRLS AND PIVOTS THROUGH THE PRECISE MOVES OF THE AGE-OLD SYSTEM OF KUNG FU...

BUT SUDDENLY...



TRAITOROUS CUR!

YOU HAVE SKILL, AND YOU USE IT TO AID THE WHITE MAN--!

YOU'RE NOT FIT TO BE CHINESE... AND I WILL KILL YOU... SKEWER YOU LIKE THE PIG YOU ARE!

NO, FAT ONE...
IT IS YOU WHO
ARE THE
TRAITOR.

YOU WHO USED YOUR
SACRED SKILLS TO
MURDER.

YOU WHO HAVE SOLD
YOUR SOUL TO A
GREEDY MASTER...

SWOOSH!

BAP THUMP

...YOU WHO
WILL FEEL OUR
REVENGE...

BAW! THUMP!

SO!

BOB! ABE! BEHIND
THIS BAMBOO WALL
--IT SEEMS SUI TI
KAMA HAD ANOTHER
SCHOOL TO HIS
CREDIT--!

AN
OPIUM
DEN.

SO HE WAS
BEHIND THE
PUNK PUSHERS
WHO TRIED TO
WASTE ME.

LOOKS
LIKE THE
FIGHT'S
OVER,
LIN.

SMASH!

WITH
HAND-
SOME
DOWN--HIS
BOYS'VE
QUIT.

HEY, DO YOU DIG
IT? THE THREE
OF US WIPED
OUT THE
CONSPIRACY...

WE DID IT,
LIN! WE
AVENGED
MASTER
KEE!

I DON'T THINK SO, ABE.
SOMEONE HAD TO SUPPLY
SUI TI WITH HIS OPIUM...

...AND WHOEVER
SUPPLIED THAT,
PROBABLY
SUPPLIED HIS
ORDERS AS
WELL.

I WON'T REST TILL
I FIND THAT SOME-
ONE...AND TRACK
HIM TO HIS...

END

ENTER, NOW, A WORLD UNLIKE ANY YOU HAVE ENTERED BEFORE--A WORLD WHERE
EVIL IS THE PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE MOST INFAMOUS VILLAIN OF
ALL TIME--

FU MANCHU

--AND THE POWER TO OPPOSE THIS
ALL-ENCOMPASSING INEQUITY RESTS
WITH ANOTHER LONE MAN--

SHANG-CHI MASTER OF KUNG FU!



PRIESTS!
FU MANCHU DEMANDS
AN **EXPLANATION--**
OR YOUR MISERABLE
LIVES!

STEVE ENGLEHART, SCRIPT
JIM STARLIN, } ART
AL MILGROM, }
GEORGE ROUSSOS, COLORS

FEATURING CHARACTERS CREATED
BY SAX ROHMER

AN EXPLANATION, O CELESTIAL ONE? IN WHAT MANNER MAY WE, HUMBLE MASTERS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS, ENLIGHTEN THE LORD OF THE SI-FAN?

IS NOT THE WISDOM AND POWER OF THE MANDARIN FU MANCHU A SOURCE OF LEGEND?

I KNOW MANY THINGS, PRIEST. FOR THE BETTER PART OF TWO CENTURIES I HAVE SOUGHT KNOWLEDGE, AND THROUGH IT, POWER!

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN. THE REST OF THE WORLD SIMPLY DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHERE OR HOW TO SEARCH IT OUT.

HOWEVER--



--I DO NOT KNOW MY SON!

YOU FOUR SUPERVISED HIS INSTRUCTION IN THE MENTAL AND MARTIAL ARTS SINCE THE DAY HIS AMERICAN MOTHER DELIVERED HIM UP TO ME!



SHANG-CHI WAS TO BE MY PRIME AGENT--

--A MASTER OF MURDER--A LIVING WEAPON TRAINED SOLELY TO SERVE! HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN NOTHING OF LIFE'S TRUTHS EXCEPT WHAT I DESIRED HIM TO KNOW!

YET HE TURNED AGAINST ME! YOU WILL EXPLAIN.

I WAS HIS FAVORITE, HONORABLE ONE. I SHALL SPEAK.



I LISTEN, CHO LIN.

AS SEEN IN OUR COLOR BOOK, MASTER OF KUNG FU--R

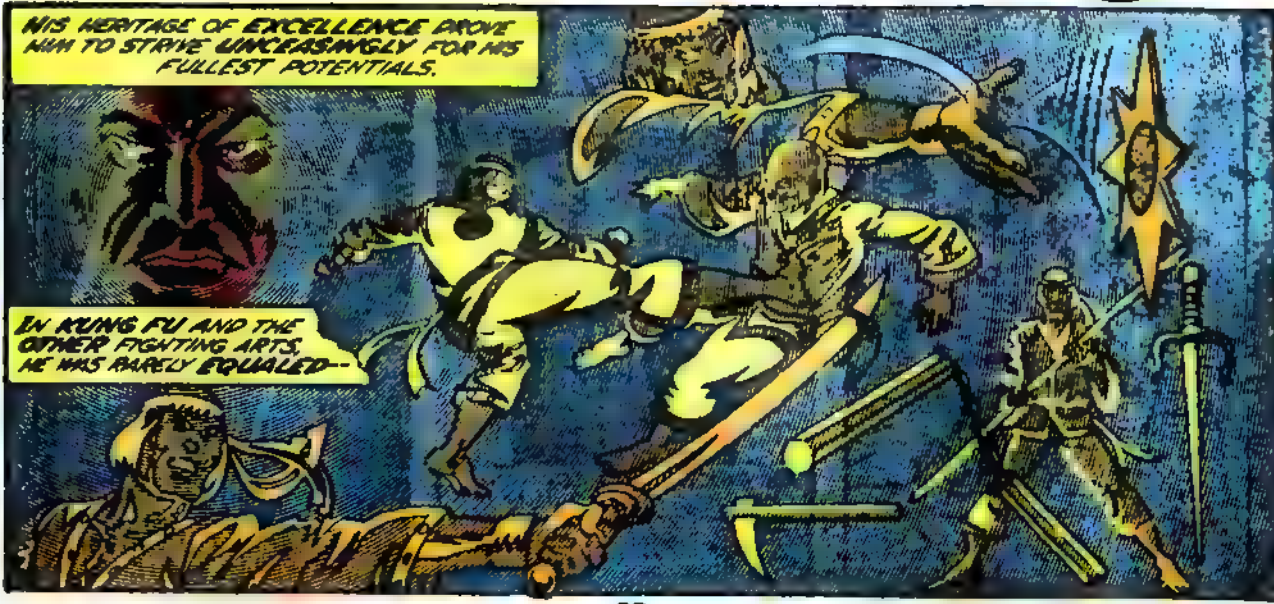
SHANG-CHI ALWAYS STOOD APART FROM THE OTHER STUDENTS. NOT OVERTLY AND NOT THROUGH HIS CHOICE OR THAT OF THE OTHERS.



IT WAS ONLY THAT HE WAS YOUR SON.

HIS HERITAGE OF EXCELLENCE PROVE HIM TO STRIVE UNCEASINGLY FOR HIS FULLEST POTENTIALS.

IN KUNG FU AND THE OTHER FIGHTING ARTS, HE WAS RARELY EQUALED--





--AND IN MENTAL DISCIPLINE... DO YOU RECALL THE DAY OF HIS FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY?

SHANG-CHI FIGHTS WELL, O' CELESTIAL ONE. ADOLESCENCE, INSTEAD OF CONFUSING HIS BODY, HAS BIRTHED NEW SPEED.

AH...



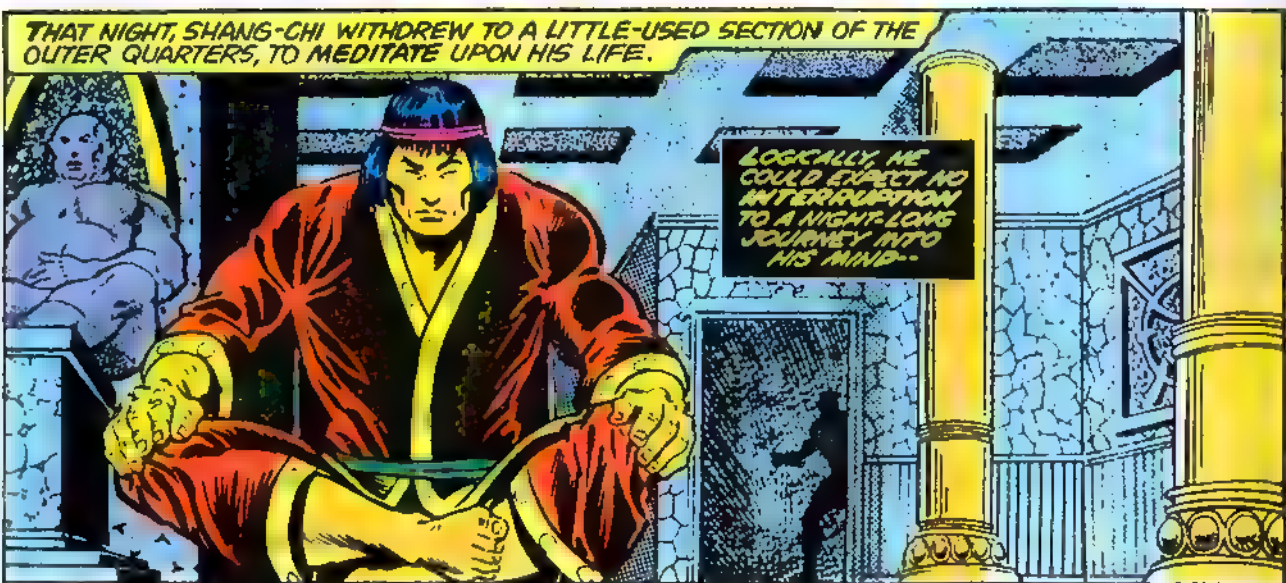
...YET I BELIEVE I DETECT MORE OF AN EMPHASIS UPON GRACE THAN UPON POWER, CHO LIN.

I WONDER IF HIDING THE PURPOSE OF HIS TRAINING FROM HIM WAS WISE.



THOUGH WELL-VERSED IN THE WAYS OF DEATH, HE HAS NEVER BEEN TRULY TESTED FOR A KILLER-INSTINCT!

A TEST MUST BE MADE.



THAT NIGHT, SHANG-CHI WITHDREW TO A LITTLE-USED SECTION OF THE OUTER QUARTERS, TO MEDITATE UPON HIS LIFE.

LOGICALLY, HE COULD EXPECT NO INTERRUPTION TO A NIGHT-LONG JOURNEY INTO HIS MIND--



--BUT LOGIC IS MERELY A METHOD OF SIMPLIFYING ONE'S REALITY.

A BRUSH OF SILK ON SLATE COMPLICATES IT.

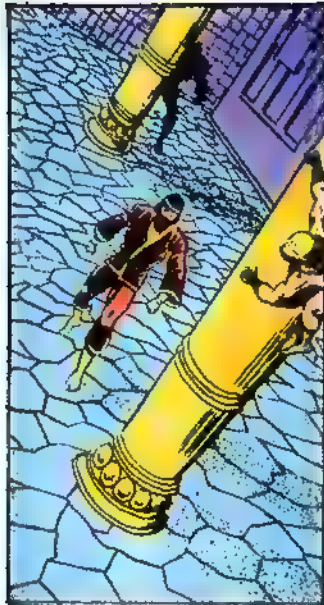


AS SHANG-CHI STRAINED HIS STILL-DEVELOPING SENSES, HE FOUND HIMSELF UNABLE TO SEE OR HEAR ANY CAUSE FOR THE SLIGHT SOUND.

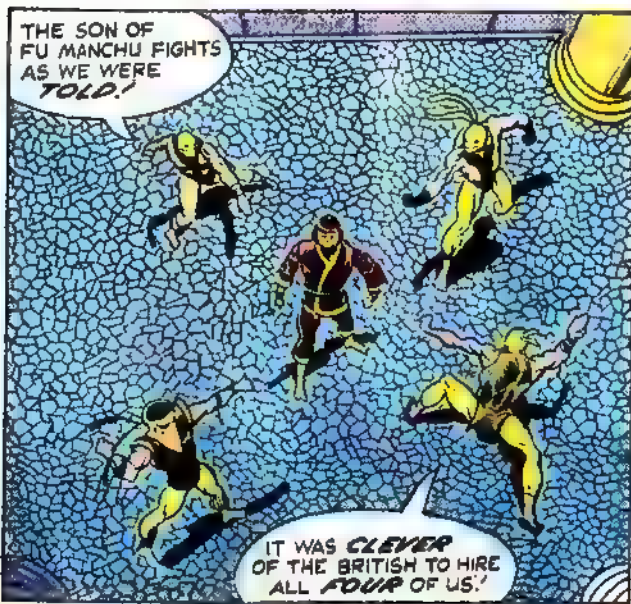


OF COURSE, THAT DROVE HIM TO HIS FEET, TO INVESTIGATE--

--AS WE HAD PLANNED.



HAIEEEEEEEE!

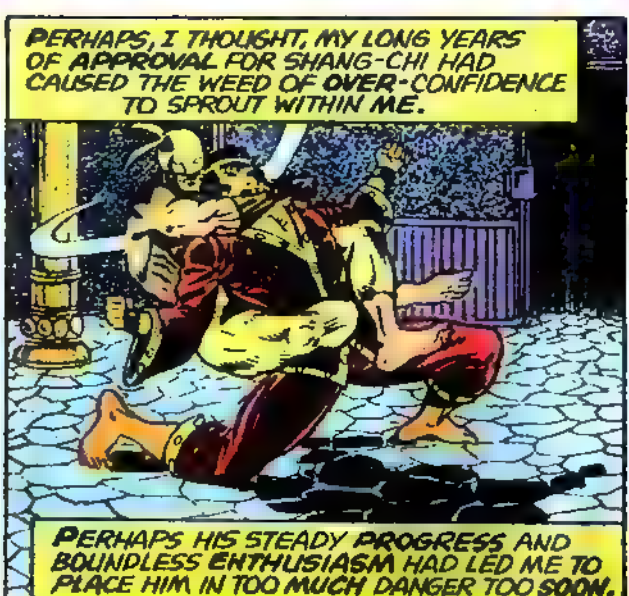
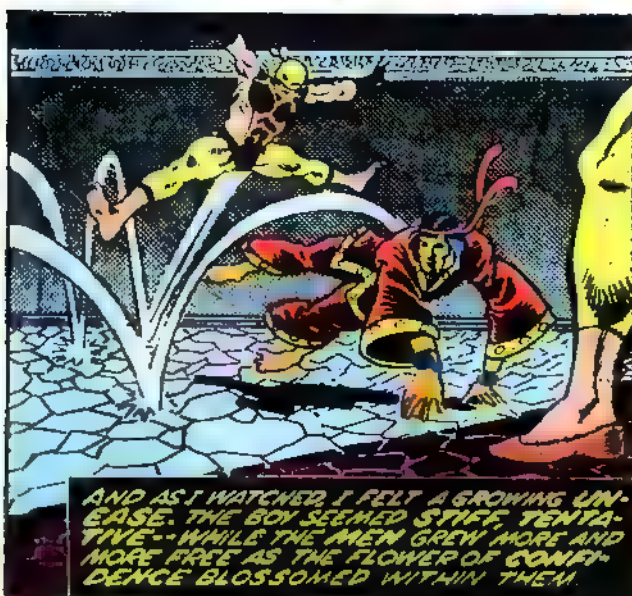
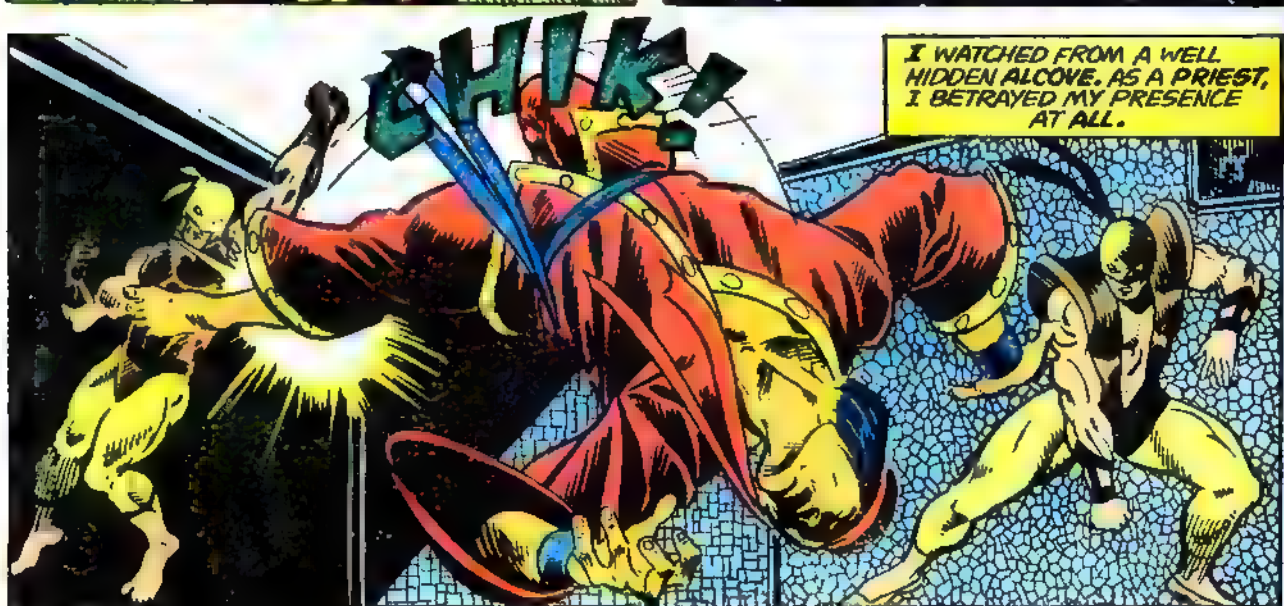


THE SON OF
FU MANCHU FIGHTS
AS WE WERE
TOLD!

IT WAS *CLEVER*
OF THE BRITISH TO HIRE
ALL *FOUR* OF US.



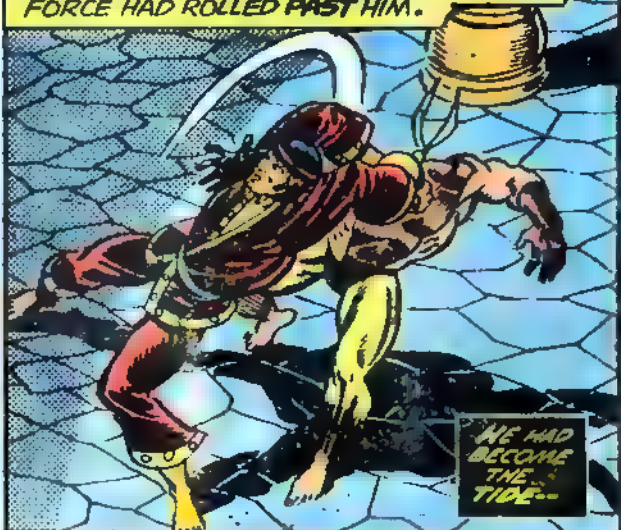
ONCE AGAIN AS SO MANY TIMES IN THE
PAST, SHANG-CHI BELIEVED THAT WHICH
YOU WISHED HIM TO BELIEVE.



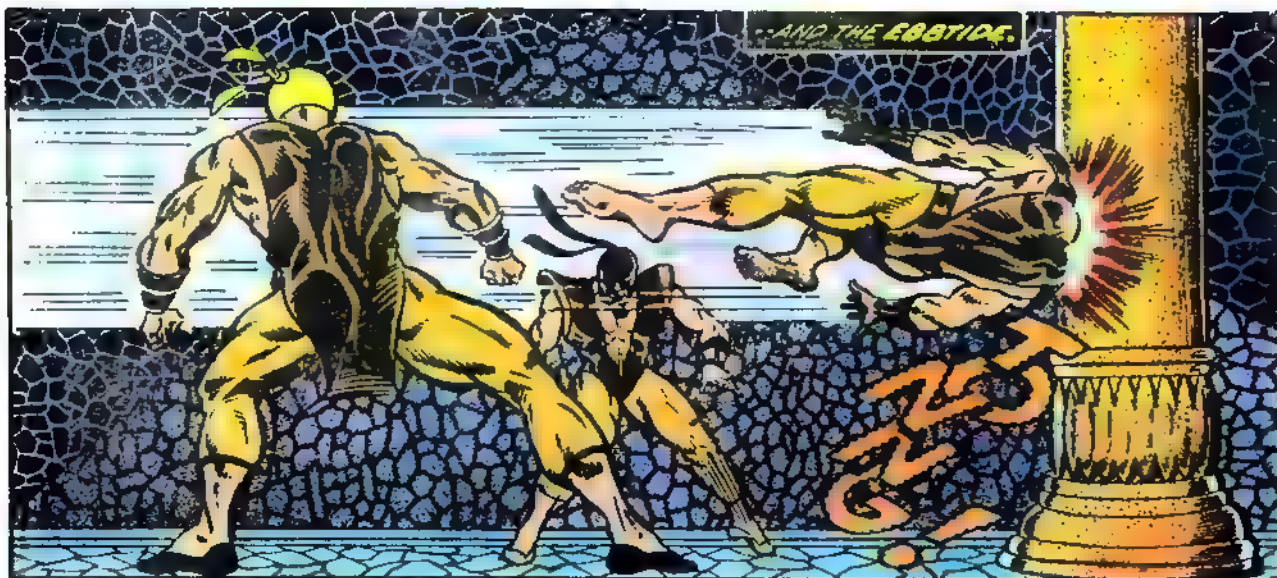
IT WAS MY FIRST MOMENT OF SELF-DOUBT
IN FOURTEEN YEARS. IT HAS BEEN MY LAST.



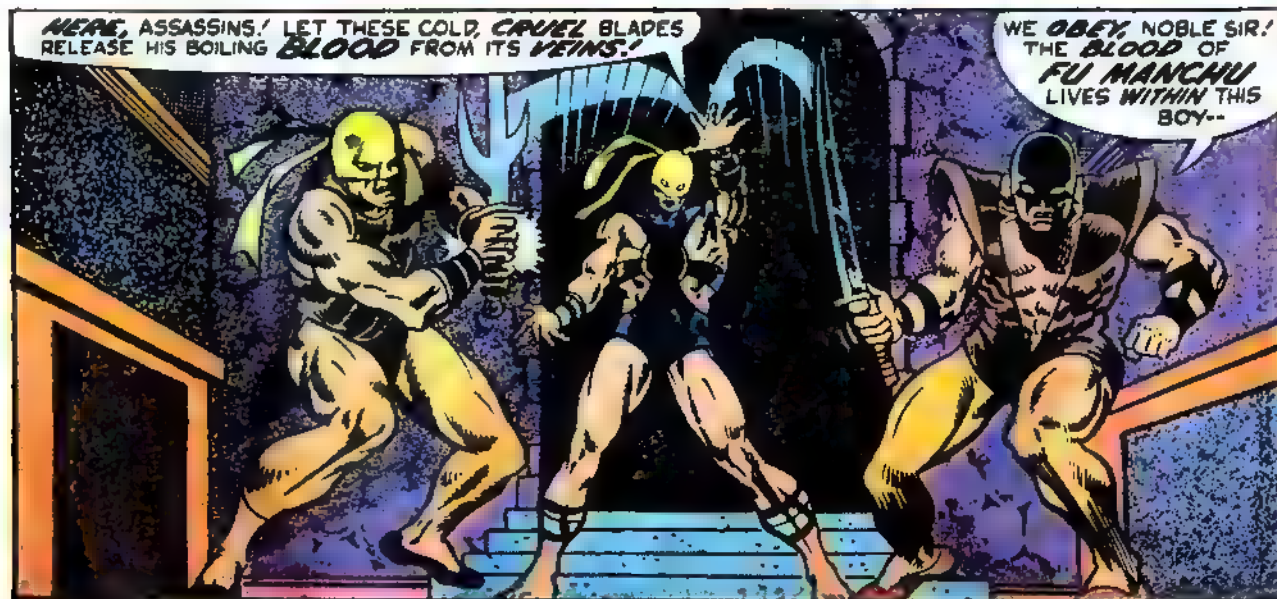
IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT YOUR SON HAD
BEEN WAITING UNTIL THE FIRST WAVE OF
FORCE HAD ROLLED PAST HIM.



...AND THE EBBTIDE.



HERE, ASSASSINS! LET THESE COLD, CRUEL BLADES
RELEASE HIS BOILING **BLOOD** FROM ITS VEINS!



WE OBEY, NOBLE SIR!
THE BLOOD OF
FU MANCHU
LIVES WITHIN THIS
BOY--



--MUST GRACE THE
FLOORS OF FU
MANCHU BELOW
H--



MISSED! THE
LAD LEAPS LIKE A
LOCUST!
I'LL--

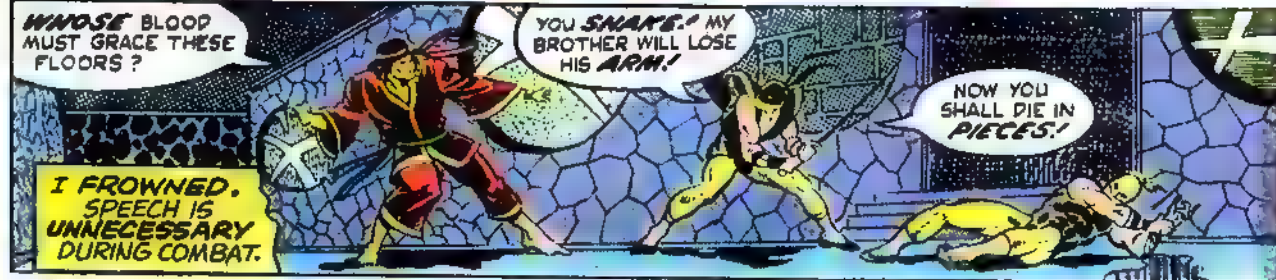
MISSED
AGAIN!



NOW,
BROTHER!
WE HAVE HIM
BETWEEN
US!



YES! STRIKE NOW!



WHOSE BLOOD
MUST GRACE THESE
FLOORS?

YOU SNAKE! MY
BROTHER WILL LOSE
HIS ARM!

NOW YOU
SHALL DIE IN
PIECES!

I FROWNED.
SPEECH IS
UNNECESSARY
DURING COMBAT.

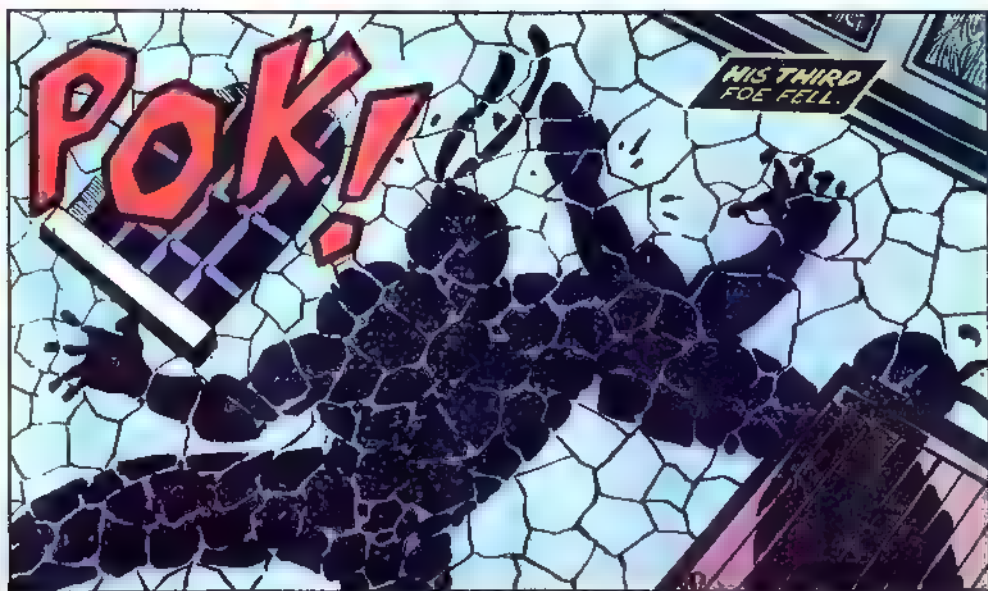
SHANG-CHI'S SOLE RESPONSE
WAS TO GATHER HIMSELF
THOUGH HIS PREVIOUS WORDS
HAD BEEN ERRORS--

--I NOTED WITH SATISFAC-
TION THE SPEED WITH WHICH
HE RETURNED TO THE LES-
SONS OF HIS INSTRUCTION.

PERHAPS HE HAD SURREN-
DERED TO PRIDE FOR THE
MOMENT--YET, HE HAD FOUGHT
FREE OF IT, OVERCOMING HIS
GREATEST FOE HIMSELF.

HE WHO DOES THAT
FEARS NOTHING--





SO THERE REMAINED BUT THE LEADER-- A TALL, LAMBER MAN WITH THE LANGUID BUT DEADLY Demeanor OF THE PROFESSIONAL ASSASSIN--

--AND A FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD YOUTH WHO HAD DISPATCHED THE MAN'S AIDES IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES.

YOU HAD PROVIDED THESE KILLERS FOR THE TEST, O CELESTIAL ONE. I KNEW NOTHING OF THEIR CAPABILITIES--

--YET I READ IN MANY TINY SIGNS THAT THIS LEADER WAS MUCH MORE DANGEROUS THAN HIS FOLLOWERS.

THE BRITISH DEMAND YOUR LIFE, LITTLE BOY-- AND I NEVER FAIL!

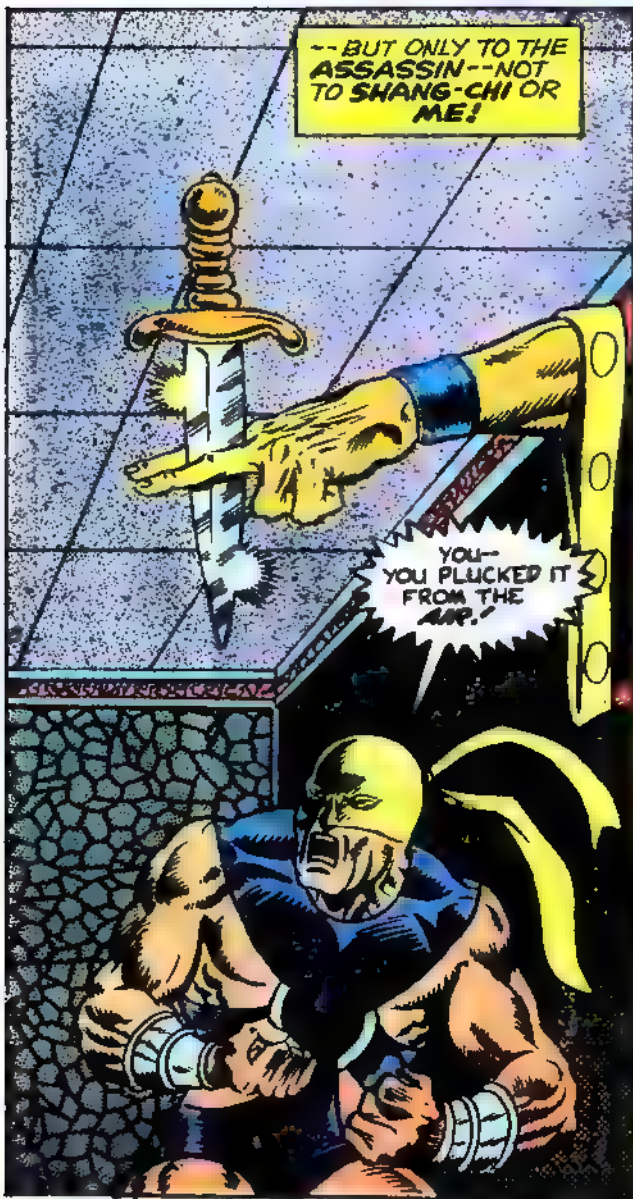
FOR A MOMENT IT SEEMED AS IF SHANG-CHI WOULD ALLOW HIS PRIDE TO CONTROL HIM AGAIN, AND FORCE A BREATHE-SEATING RETORT FROM HIS LIPS--

--BUT HE HAD LEARNED-- AND IT WAS WELL THAT HE HAD--

--FOR THE ASSASSIN ABRUPTLY HURLED HIS HIDDEN DAGGER DIRECTLY AT HIS CHEST!

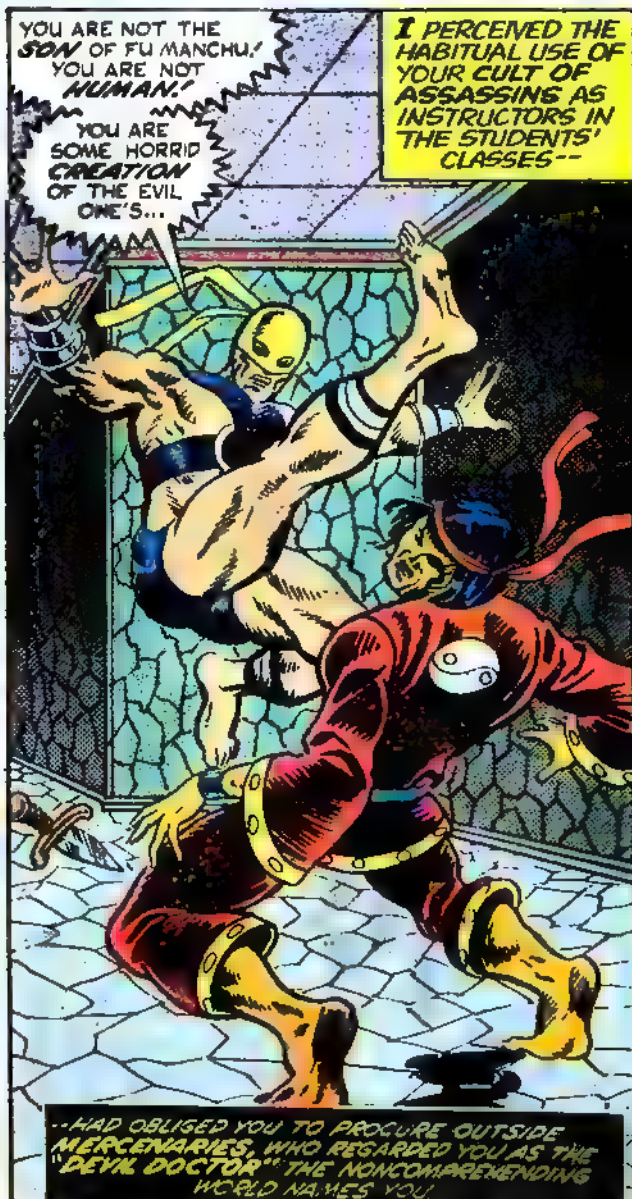


AT THE LAST INSTANT, THE
BLADE SEEMED TO HURSH--



-- BUT ONLY TO THE
ASSASSIN--NOT
TO SHANG-CHI OR
ME!

YOU--
YOU PLUCKED IT
FROM THE
AIR!

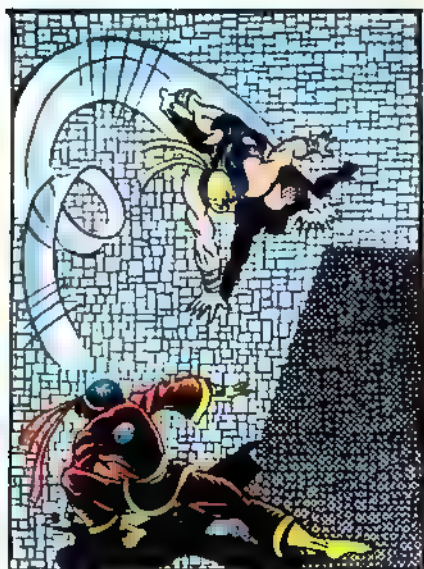
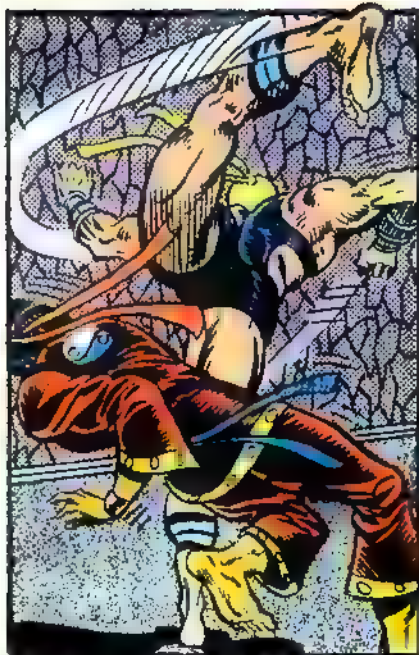


YOU ARE NOT THE
SON OF FU MANCHU!
YOU ARE NOT
HUMAN!

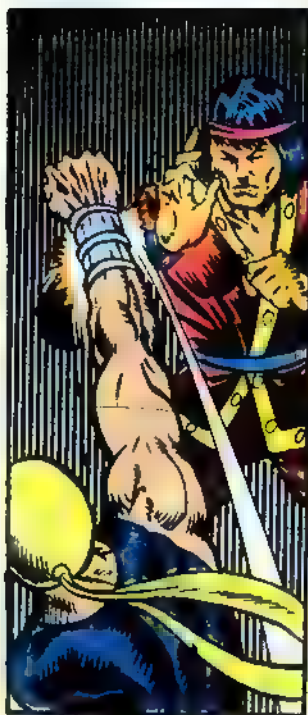
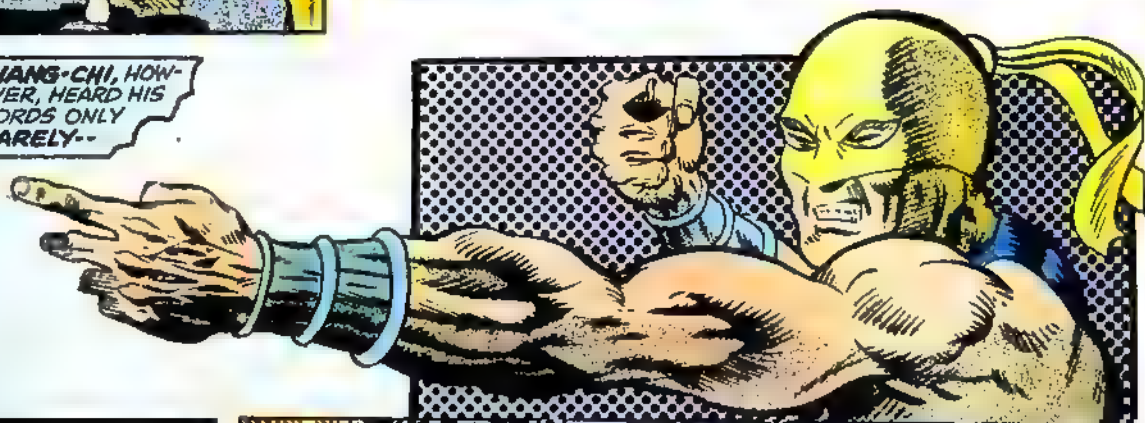
YOU ARE
SOME HORRID
CREATION
OF THE EVIL
ONE'S...

I PERCEIVED THE
HABITUAL USE OF
YOUR CULT OF
ASSASSINING AS
INSTRUCTORS IN
THE STUDENTS'
CLASSES--

--HAD OBLIGED YOU TO PROCURE OUTSIDE
MERCENARIES, WHO REGARDED YOU AS THE
"DEVIL DOCTOR" THE NONCOMPREHENDING
WORLD NAMES YOU!



SHANG-CHI, HOW-
EVER, HEARD HIS
WORDS ONLY
BARELY--

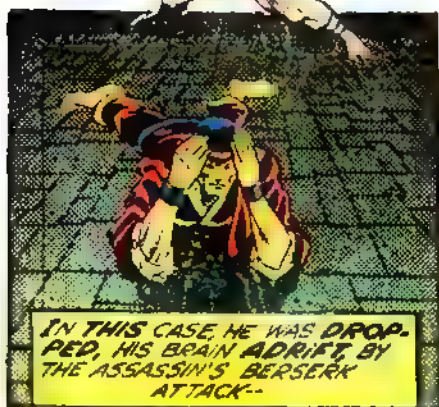


--A TRAIT
I LATER
DISCUSSED
WITH HIM.





--THINKING THEM PART OF WHAT HE CONSIDERED THE SIMPLE-MINDED PRO-WESTERN PROPAGANDA HIS ENEMIES HAD SCREAMED THROUGHOUT THE CONFLICT.



IN THIS CASE, HE WAS DROPPED, HIS BRAIN ADRIFT BY THE ASSASSIN'S BERSERK ATTACK--

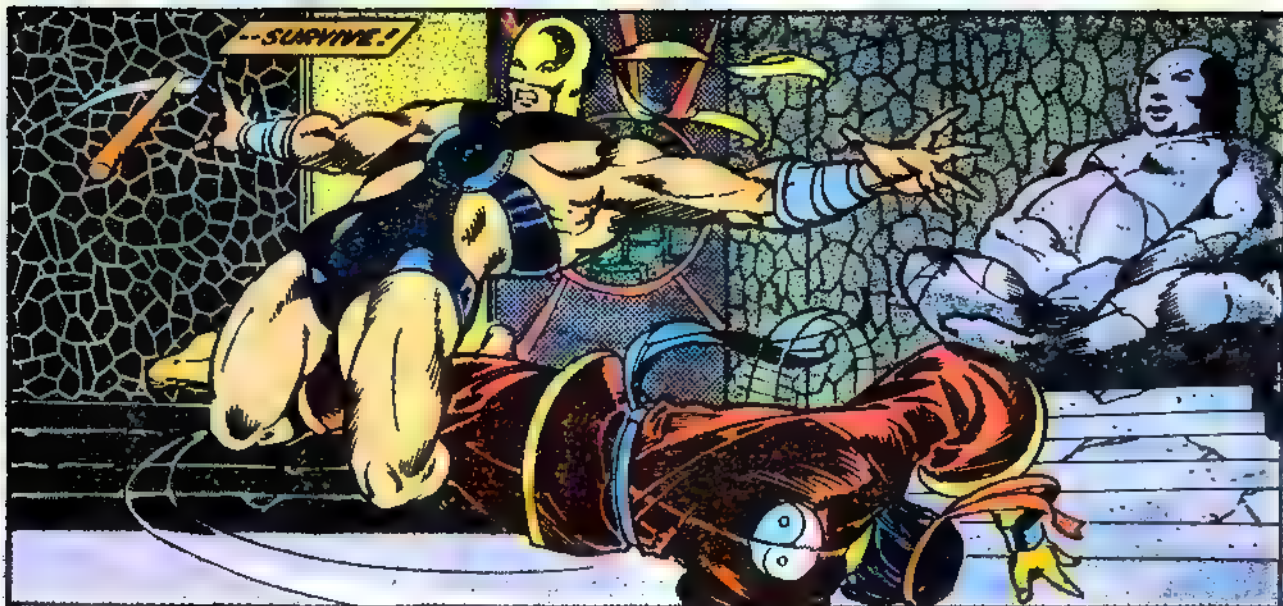
--BUT AS DEATH APPROACHED, BLADE UPRaised SHANG-CHI CALLED UPON HIS CHI--

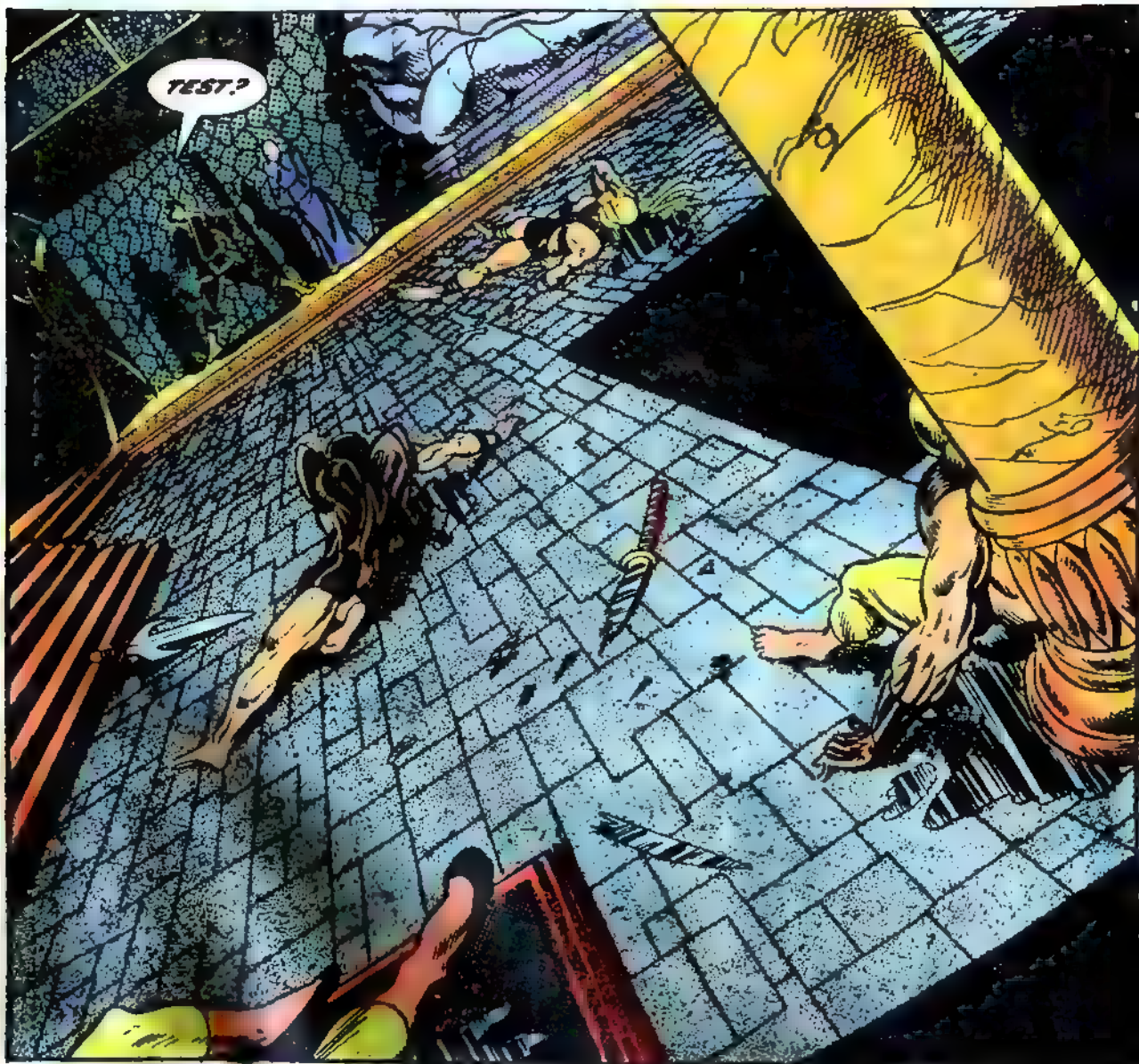
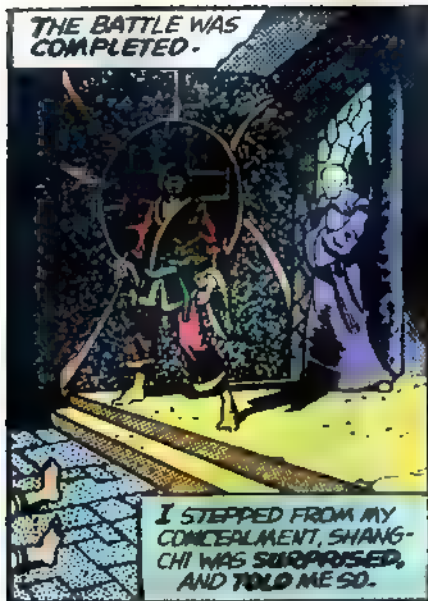


--HIS RULING STRENGTH-- HIS SPIRIT--



--TO TRULY SEE WITH HIS EYES--TO LISTEN WITH HIS EARS--TO MASTER HIS BODY, SO THAT HE MIGHT--





I INTERPRETED HIS WORDS AS
ASTONISHMENT OVER THE
THOROUGHNESS OF YOUR
ENDEAVORS...

FOOL! HE WAS **OBVIOUSLY** UPSET
OVER THE **BRUTALITY** AND **SUF-
FERING** HE SAW IN MY TEST!
HE SAW NOT THE **NEED!**

CHO LIN, I AM
AMAZED AT SUCH
INSENSITIVITY
IN YOU!

I MOST ABJECTLY
APOLOGIZE,
O' CELESTIAL ONE,
AND **THROW**
MYSELF AT
YOUR FEET.

I HAVE
FAILED
YOU, AND SO,
MYSELF.

YOU HAVE ALSO
STRUGGLED
BESIDE ME FOR
MANY YEARS,
CHO LIN, I
FORGIVE
YOU.

OTHER PROJECTS OCCUPY
THE TIME I HAD PLANNED FOR
SHANG-CHI-- NOT THE
LEAST OF WHICH IS HIS
DEATH.

I HAVE MY
EXPLANATION.
I DESIRE **NO**
MORE.

YOU HAVE MY
GRATITUDE,
HONORABLE
ONE.

YOU KNOW THAT
SERVING YOU
IS MY GREATEST
JOY...



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**THE
AVENGERS #73**

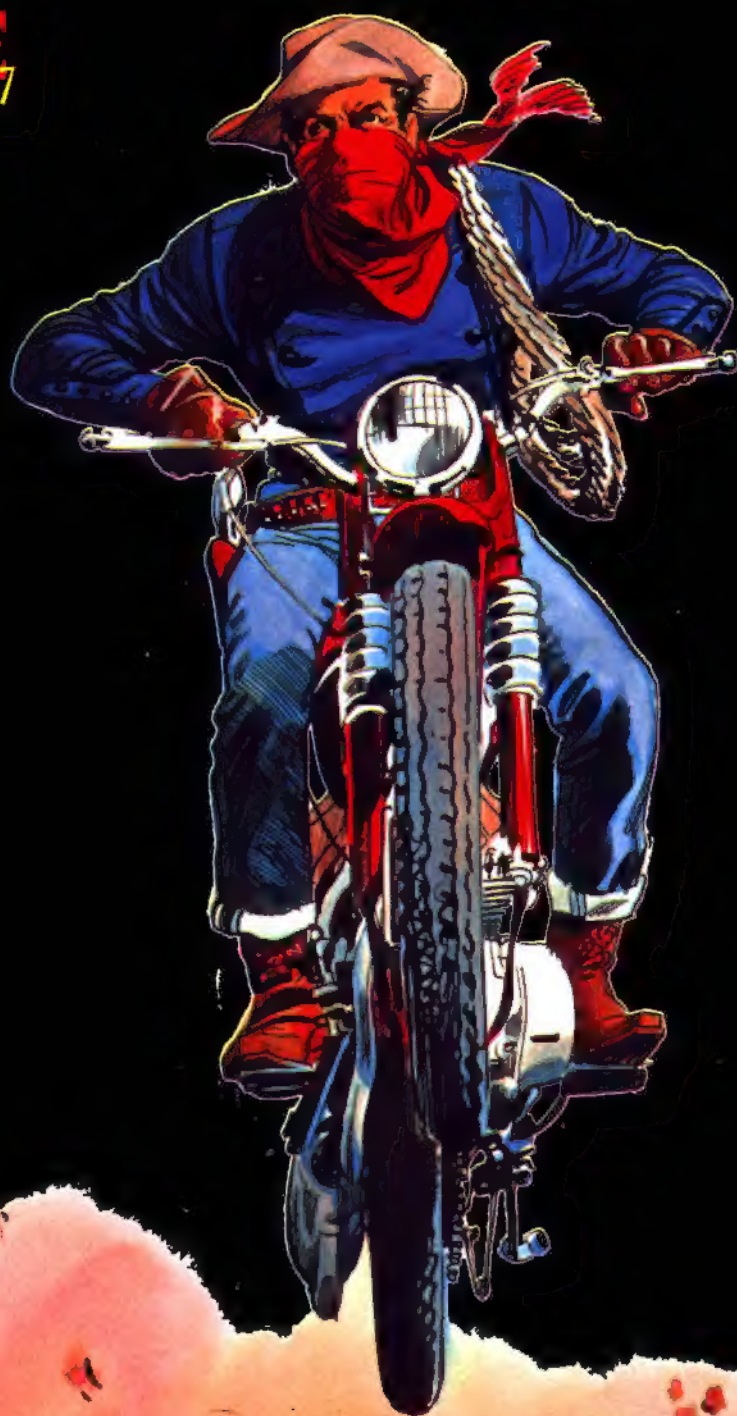
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AVENGERS**

PENCILS BY
**RON
WILSON**
&
**KEITH
POLLARD**
INKS BY
**MIKE
ESPOSITO**

ORIGINALLY
PRESENTED IN
**THE
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A
VIGILANTE
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